



I'M SORRY FOR BEING
BORN IN THIS WORLD

Vortex

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

I'm Sorry For Being Born In This World!

(이V세계에 태어나서 죄송합니다!)

by

Vortex

Synopsis

What got summoned was the world's strongest sociopath.

His ability is one that allows him to buy anything, [Heart of Gold].

The Demon King is dead. Now, it's time to kill the hero.

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Chapter 1. Prologue

I sat myself down on the electric chair.

The executioner hesitantly made his way towards me, and fastened my hands and ankles. His hands were trembling uncontrollably as he put the restraining device on my neck.

“I-I’ll pu, hah, put the electrodes on your head n-now.”

He was a polite man.

He explained his every move to me, a person on death row, and put the crown of death on my head.

Now, with this, everything was ready.

Three executions. Two previous executions by lethal injection had failed. Now, the Texas state government had prepared an electric chair, just for me, which they were turning on right now.

“...Not as bad as I thought it would be.”

The bailiffs around me stepped back in fear when they heard this.

“What, am I that scary to you people?”

There was no response.

When I looked around me, I found that the eyes of the executives from Interpol that were also filled with fear.

“Look at me. I’m just a normal human. There’s no need to experiment on me anymore.”

The director of the FBI shook his head when he heard me say this.

The president of Interpol seemed to be unable to take it anymore, then turned around to make the sign of the cross.

In any case.

The device on my throat’s making it a little hard to speak...

“Let’s loosen this up a little...”

Craack. Snap, snap.

I ripped off the steel restraints on my wrists, and put my hands on my throat.

The agents around me all took out their guns in surprise.

But none of them actually aimed their guns at me.

“My throat hurts.”

I snapped the restraining device on my neck with my fingers. Then, I quietly put my hands down where they were before.

All eyes in the room turned to the broken locks on my throat. They were all trembling with fear and nervousness.

“Pr—”

The bailiff in front of me swallowed once, and continued with his shaky voice.

“Prisoner number 8358, Menticide.”

This was my nickname.

I didn't have a birth name or anything.

“We shall now begin the execution of prisoner Menticide for the murder of 96,732 individuals. Prisoner, do you have any last words?”

I began to think.

Even after a long time of rumination, life didn't really seem worth living.

I once thought there was a reason for my birth, but that just turned out to be an illusion.

How awful.

“If I were to be honest with you all, I am a useless, irrational, and a meaningless human being.”

What managed to fill my heart after all these years wasn't a dream, but just reality.

The shadow of myself that used to be passionate about dreams and wishes had been swallowed by the dusk.

“As someone who was always trying to find something to live by, even I cannot answer if I have lived a fulfilling life or not.”

I was only ashamed of myself.

It was impossible to get a satisfactory answer out of a person who lived a life filled with boredom.

“There is only one thing that I'd like to say before I leave this world.”

I crossed my legs and lit an electronic cigarette that I had been hiding in my mouth. My head was tilted upwards, and was looking down on everyone around me.

Then, I uttered my last words.

“I’m sorry for being born in this world.”

The bailiff frowned and nodded at the executioner on the other side of the glass.

Clank.

A heavy, metallic sound descended upon the room.

The electric chair activated.

The Haze Republic.

Under its government building was a magic workshop that existed for over a hundred years.

Its name was Bessica Pisces, the Womb of the World

In this place, which usually contained very few people, was a large group of wizards.

“He’s dead... You sure you summoned the right one?”

Inside the blue summoning circle was a hot, steaming corpse.

Based on its looks, it was an adult male.

His face was molten from all the heat, and his limbs were cracked open like the scorched earth itself with blood spilling out of it.

“Just what is...”

The chair he was sitting on was abnormal as well.

The wires attached to it had snapped in two during the summoning process, but they were still sparking with electricity.

“Eh? This shouldn’t have happened...?”

A shrill voice popped out amongst the mutters in the crowd.

The frowning wizards all turned to the person who had just spoken.

“Ah... that idiot again?”

The youngster who had just become a government wizard.

It was Dennis Brain.

“God damn it, that dumbass!”

The idiot who wouldn't even have gotten here if it wasn't for the recommendation from the strongest dark mage, Necro Kill.

This was how the wizards all thought of Dennis.

“Why the hell did Necro take in a dumbass like that as his disciple?”

Dennis simply scratched his head even as he heard others in the room insult him.

He only did what he was told to do.

He didn't know just what he did wrong.

That was why he was simply looking at the steaming corpse with a confused look on his face, all the while saying this.

“How strange... this shouldn't be happening...”

“Shouldn’t be happening?”

His teacher, Necro Kill, approached him from behind and kicked his calves.

“Oi, bastard! Aren’t you going to check what happened properly?”

Dennis hopped in place because of the pain.

Whenever he did so, however, more kicks came his way.

“Aren’t you! Going to! Check what happened?! Don’t you remember me telling you that this was your last chance? Do you actually want to be killed by me? Hah?!”

Dennis, who was rubbing his injury with his hands, quickly responded.

“I, I’ll check! Yes... yes! So.. so.. eh... eh? So strange?”

Necro’s eyebrows began to tremble.

“Strange? Do you want to get beat up until you start looking strange yourself?”

“N, no! I mean, there are no problems with the summoning

process itself...”

“No problems? So?”

“Like you said, I summoned the person with the highest fighting capabilities? But...”

Necro noticed the gazes from around him, and lowered his voice.

“How did you determine its fighting capability? Give me the equation you used.”

Dennis, fearing that he would be kicked again, quickly brought his work to Necro.

“Eh... so... it was the person with the highest number of murders?”

“Are you asking me a question here? Are you kidding me?”

“N, no! So... I mean... the person who killed the highest amount of people in one-on-one combat.”

Dennis seemed to realize the strangeness of his words, and began to quiet down as a result.

“The strongest person out of all those people was...”

“You goddamn idiot... How the hell did you graduate with a brain like that? You used your status, didn’t you? Come on, be serious with me here.”

A different wizard chimed into the conversation after taking some pity on Dennis’ plight.

“Let’s stop it there. I mean, what’s done is done, so let’s just focus on turning in a report to the higher-ups...”

“Ah, hold on a second! We need to get rid of this shit before we do anything! Don’t you dare interrupt another instructor about this!”

The wizard clicked his tongue and moved away.

“Damn that temper of his... Fine! Do what you want!”

Necro, who was about to retaliate against the man, put his hand on his forehead and tried to calm down.

Nothing was going the way he wanted it to!

“God damn it all!”

He didn’t foresee something like this happening.

He would've danced in joy even if a man without any limbs had been summoned.

Dead...

Summoned as a corpse...!

Are you kidding me?!

A professor who was usually on Necro's friendly side walked over to console him.

"Professor, let's try to calm down for a second? There are older wizards around here."

"...Calm down?"

That set him off.

"The hero was! Fucking! Summoned as a corpse! Do you think I can calm down like this?!"

The wizard flinched back in shock at the shout that seemed to reverberate across the entire complex.

"Why are you angry at me, now... and it's not like he's actually a

hero, either... Dear me, you really have a temper, don't you. Dennis, get over here. Don't anger your teacher any further."

Dennis made his way behind the wizard.

Necro looked at this disappointedly, then turned back to the wizard.

"You, I'll see you later."

The area was cleaned up soon after and the wizards in the complex began to leave.

The responsibility of the disaster would befall not on them, but the one who directed the entire project.

That was, of course, because the leader should always be the one to shoulder all of the blame.

Necro put a palm over his face and stared at the summoned corpse.

A different professor came over to Necro with an expression full of mixed feelings.

"W... what shall we do with that? Should we clean it up?"

Necro seemed to think for a second, then opened his mouth.

“Just leave. I’ll deal with it.”

The professor exited the building. There was now only him, Necro, and a white wizard in the complex.

“There’s not enough sacrifice, not enough time nor cash... what should I do...”

Necro, who had been licking the insides of his mouth for quite some time, glanced over at the white wizard, then scratched his head.

“I wonder if it’d be alright to do something like this...”

I felt faint.

Did it fail again? I thought that much voltage would’ve surely been enough to kill me...

“Would it really be ok to use necromancy on this thing?”

“Even if it isn’t alright... well, the dice has already been thrown. It was either this or trying to persuade the higher-ups again.”

I could hear a conversation from somewhere not too far away.

One was a girl who seemed to be around the age of 13-17. Another was a man in his mid-20s.

The girl spoke German and the man spoke Korean.

They were languages that I knew from the start, but the way I understood the words was completely different from before.

It almost felt like the meanings were transferred directly to my brain.

“It still seems unstable...”

“You need to let it rest for an hour to stabilize it. Hey, what are you looking at? Move it!”

“Ah, he really does treat his students like slaves. If it wasn’t for my shitty grade...”

It was a language that I had never heard of before. But I could still understand it.

“I’ll give you all the grades that you’ll want, so just move it.”

“To where?”

“Over there, the 4th Waiting Room.”

“What? Isn’t that place ‘their’ home base?”

“So what? The thing’s already dead. You think they’d go around playing with a corpse?”

The noises around me began to fade away.

Contrary to that, my consciousness began to clear up.

After some time, I came to face an endless pit of darkness.

Was this death?

I couldn’t really tell, since I had never died before.

As I thought carefully to myself, something that seemed to be a notification window popped up.

<Welcome to a new world, sir. I am the one who will make sure that you will have a safe journey here– [The World Algorithm = Oracle].>

What’s this? A new world? Oracle?

I couldn't tell who was talking, and I couldn't understand what the person was talking about. It's not like my mind is unclear or anything either...

Is there a camera somewhere or something?

What a strange thing this is.

I could come up with several theories about my situation right now, but I didn't have sufficient info.

Let's keep observing then.

Moments after I came to this conclusion, the world around me cleared up.

What was revealed to me after the darkness was an endless white space.

<The v3.7 update for Oracle has been completed. Language set to "Korean". Resetting preferences.>

Feels like a smartphone app.

<Please enter your name. Thinking of your desired input will

allow you to write inside the prompt.>

I don't have a name.

I waited in front of the empty prompt, wondering if my choice was right.

Ten minutes passed, but nothing changed.

So nothing changes if I leave it like this, huh...

Let's just enter a random name.

<User registered. Your ID is XIN. In this world, you will be referred to as 'Jin'.>

A message immediately floated up after this.

<If you shout [Status] using the same method you used to write your name, you will be able to check your status.>

Just like a game, huh.

Should I give it a try?

Status!

불로불사

Status

[Dead][Rot][Paralysis][Burn][Blind][Slow][Suffocation][Hunger][Weak][Cursed][Bound]

Level

1(EXP 0%)

Name

Jin(No real name)

Title

Menticide

History's Worst Killer

Heartless Monster

Class.

Corpse

Pers.

Pure Egoism

Power

Heart of Gold(Lv.1)

(\$0)

HP

180/180(+0)

MP

0/0(+0)

Attack

52(+0)

Spell

0(+0)

HP Regen.

2(+0)

MP Regen.

0(+0)

Defense

19(+0)

Magic Res.

75(+0)

Abilities

Whitehead(Lv.9)

Xenoglossy(Lv.2)NEW

Menticide(Lv.9)

Demon Eyes

Oracle(Rk.S-)NEW

Chapter 2. How To Level Up Quickly

I was a little surprised.

It was a lot like a hologram.

The contents of it are...

What managed to grab my attention was the red [Status] effects.

Dead, rot, paralysis, burn... I get why burn is there, but what's up with "cursed"?

The existence of curses aside, though..

I was classified as a corpse.

If one was able to think despite being dead, the person might as well be alive.

If this was all there was to death, the idea of life being precious became a simple joke.

Death made humans sad because they would never be able to talk to those who had departed.

I looked around a bit more to try and make sense of the situation,

then felt a change around me.

The white space I was in was breaking down.

And then.

Something flashed in front of me, and I became dizzy. I began to feel as if I was being dragged into the bottommost part of the sea-

At some point when I was resisting, I realized that the feeling had disappeared.

What was going on?

I could feel a dull pressure from the back of my head, my back, my posterior, and my arms.

Was I tranquilized? Was this because I was dead?

I could hear the sound of metal being scratched through my ears.

My nose... I could smell blood and smoke through it. My tongue couldn't taste anything.

I tried to open my eyes, but my eyelids refused to move.

When I exerted some force, I could hear something rip. One of

my eyes barely managed to open.

I can't see...

Everything I saw was white. It was almost as if a white veil had been placed on my eyes.

I could only make out some shadows in front of me.

And in this white world, a beautiful light that resembled the aurora of the North shined.

This is...

The amount of things happening around me made me confused. My body wasn't doing so well either.

I suppose this feeling could be described as having wet blankets wrapped around my limbs. The feeling of having clay stuck on your bones might be a fitting description as well.

Now, what shall I do?

If I was currently lying down in a hospital, it would be good for me to wait for the nurse. After all, things could only get worse the more I tried to move.

I had already come to the police to be killed. There was no point in trying to run.

Right, I suppose I'll wait until someone comes.

After all, the current situation was quite interesting to me.

Five minutes after I made my decision, I could hear several kids in the distance.

They seemed to be around thirteen to eighteen, middle or high schoolers. They seemed to be from Korea, like me.

“My level's not going up.”

“That's because you keep hitting them when they're about to die. Haven't you heard what they were talking about in the orientation?”

Were they talking about a game?

“You think I'm doing this on purpose? It's all instinct, I'm telling you, instinct.”

“This is why thieves are...”

“Watch your damn mouth!”

Three boys, and two girls.

Their footsteps came to a stop near me.

“Hey, what the hell is that? Someone threw away a beggar in our base.”

“Who did this?”

The kids approached me slowly.

I couldn't see them clearly, but I could still identify them through the shadows in my eyes.

What are these kids? Were they cosplaying?

They were all wearing school clothes, but each one of them had weapons. A sword, a knife, a staff, a bow, and a cross...

If this was an RPG game, they would be a warrior, a thief, a wizard, an archer, and a priest. The classic setup of a party.

The kids circled me as they talked amongst themselves.

“Ew, gross. Did someone put his face through a microwave or something?”

“It’s completely melted.”

The girls stepped away in disgust.

“Hey, old man, stand up.”

The warrior kid began to slap my cheek.

“Stand up! God! Damn it! How long are you planning on sleeping here? You think this is your home or something?”

It doesn’t hurt, but I suppose there’s no need in pretending to sleep. There’s a lot I want to ask, too.

Well then, let’s stand up, shall we? Hup, oh, ouch.

Flop!

I fell back down on the floor.

“Ohh, so now you’re putting on a show, huh?”

I couldn’t put any strength into my arm. I couldn’t feel anything, which made it even harder to stand up.

After a few tries, I managed to stand up. I looked down on the kids calmly.

The warrior kid flinched, then broke out in laughter.

“Hey! Did you guys check out his title?”

“Title?”

Ridiculing laughter came from all the children at the same time.

“『Humanity’s Worst Killer』? Is he a middle schooler or what? Pft.”

“Can you get a title from something you named yourself as?”

The kids all grinned as the girl with the bow laughed at me.

Hm? Worst Killer? Title?

I had a good guess in what these words meant.

It was probably the status screen from that white place. If these kids could see it...

I should be able to, as well.

The way to do it would be...

A transparent window turned up in front of the kids.

I could navigate through the windows naturally, as if I had done so for a long time.

They were all level two.

As I thought, they were high schoolers, and their titles were [Smelter], [Steal More], [Grand Cheat], [Ultimate Quiver], and [Restore]. They were the same name as their “powers”.

Why is that?

What is “personality”, and what is “power” supposed to be...? Of course, I wasn’t asking for the actual definition of the words.

“ ... ”

I tried opening my mouth, but no sound came out. Obviously, this was because my lungs weren’t moving at all.

Would they understand sign language?

“I think he’s mute...”

“Yeah. What’s he trying to say?”

As I thought, no luck.

If only I had a pen...

There were no writing utensils around, though.

“Eh? Hey, this guy’s dead? Look at his status.”

“Huh? You’re right? Is he a monster, then?”

Ultimate Quiver aimed his bow at me the moment he heard the word “monster”.

He seemed to be ready to let go at any second.

He doesn’t have a quiver of any sort... where did the arrow come from? Magic? Special effects?

“He’d have attacked already if he was a beast. Seeing how he’s classified as a corpse, maybe that guy who uses necromancy revived him?”

Necromancy. A form of black magic that controlled corpses. It was an ability that often appeared in video games.

The girl lowered her bow after hearing Grand Cheat's explanation. The arrow on the bow turned into grains of light and disappeared.

“Disappointing. I'd have killed him if he was a monster.”

Smelter grinned after hearing Steal More's words.

“Who said you couldn't?”

The Smelter pulled out his sword.

“So you're supposed to be the Worst Killer or something? Let's try fighting, shall we? I want to check out how strong I am.”

I shook my head.

I understood that I was in a different world, and that it was possible to see status screens like in video games. I also understood that everyone had special abilities on their hands.

I probably had one as well.

Then, what was important here would be to collect information.

There was no need to start fighting immediately without

knowing the other side's ability. If there really were special abilities, the first logical thing to do would be to learn how to break it.

I was slowly beginning to gain some interest in this world.

“What, are you scared?”

The Smelter translated my rejection differently.

Anyone from the underground world would've ran away on their own after seeing my title...

“You're a grown adult. Aren't you embarrassed? Or maybe it's too much for someone like you to fight little children?”

“You know he's the strongest fighter in his city?”

...I couldn't even laugh.

I just nodded after looking at Restore's actions.

I then headed towards the exit.

I had learned how to see through this white veil at this point, so I could tell generally what was around me.

“Wow, he’s ignoring me. Where do you think you’re going?”

Smelter blocked my path with a sword in his hand. The rest of the group surrounded me with their weapons in their hands as well.

What era was this supposed to be? Kids who haven’t even graduated from high school were pointing weapons towards someone...

I pushed the sword away and walked forward.

Smelter’s body got pushed away with it, due to our differences in size.

“Hah...”

An annoyed laugh came out of Smelter’s mouth.

They should attack about now.

The sword in Smelter’s hands began to arc towards my neck.

I had expected the attack beforehand, so I dodged it easily, and turned to look at Smelter.

I couldn’t see his face, but judging from the trembling shoulders,

I could tell that he was quite mad.

When I was shooing him away with my hand, he shouted out in rage.

“Minsung!”

Steal More extended his hands towards me with his body lowered.

Why wasn't he using his knife...?

I dodged to the left.

As I did this, Steal More's body, which had been coming towards me from the right, disappeared, only to appear to my left.

Grand Cheat showed a satisfied grin.

What just...?

“Caught you!”

When Steal More's hand touched my left leg, I fell down powerlessly.

Paralysis?

I couldn't put any strength into my lefts.

"You can't move, can you?"

Was this one of their special abilities?

"This is my power! 『Endless Greed = Steal More』. I can steal anything aside from a person's power! Money, weapon, body, looks, and even strength!"

What an idiot.

Why was he going so far as to explain his abilities to me?

With this, though, I learned that special abilities were referred to as "power" in this world, and also learned that my strength was what just got stolen from me.

This meant that my special ability was 『Gold Achieves All = Heart of Gold』.

Was it an ability that allowed me to control gold?

Or did the use of my ability require gold?

I had no idea how to use it...

“Good job!”

Smelter put his hand towards a statue on one side of the wall.

The statue melted and out came a long chain.

Kusari-Fundo (鎖分銅).

It was a chain that had weights added to it on each end.

So that was how they made their weapons?

That must be why their weapons were so poorly made...

I wasn't planning on killing them before, but change of plans.

Killing this kid is worth taking the risk.

As I watched Smelter swing his weapon, I caught an arrow that was shot towards me from behind.

“No way...”

Ultimate Quiver covered her mouth in surprise.

I was planning on throwing it back at her after I grabbed it, but the arrow had turned to light particles before I could do so.

So there wasn't any other advantages to these arrows other than being able to use it infinitely?

Or maybe the ability hasn't been fully matured yet.

Now, there was two people left.

Grand Cheat and Restore.

Grand Cheat probably tricks you in some way and Restore should just restore injuries.

The kusari-fundo flew towards my chest.

It was such an obvious attack, which I almost instinctively dodged left, but remembered what had happened with Steal More.

I lifted my arms to protect my chest and head.

Crack!

My left arm was hit.

My balance was shaken as a result.

The attack was coming straight towards my chest, but again it came from the side.

This was probably the result of 『The Great Trick = Grand Cheat』.

It probably had the effect of ‘changing A to B’.

“Are you a mannequin or something? At least resist. Try shaking your hand like before?”

The Smelter smiled as if he had already won.

“Hey guys, try cheering for him or something? Who knows, maybe he’ll get an erection from it?”

“Should we?”

Restore smiled, and began to clap.

“Fight hard, you piece of shit!”

Chapter 3. Menticide's True Nature

Was it really fun for people to lynch a single individual as a group? I don't think I'd ever understand such a feeling.

I looked up at the child that was approaching me. What was in his hand was a dangerous battleaxe.

The Smelter, who came right in front of me, flicked his head, and asked a question.

“Ah~ Seriously. You're su~per boring. Is this all you got? Old man, why don't you have any stamina? This is why you ended up being a loser in a world like this.”

“What, are you starting already?”

Smelter shrugged when Ultimate Quiver asked a question.

“Isn't this something that a hero who comes in this world has to do at some point, anyway?”

“That's true. And he's a murderer in the first place, so killing him won't be a sin.”

“This is what I call justice, you know? A hero kills a murderer who brought chaos in the world. The strongest murderer in the world at that.”

“Wait, so why are you always the only one doing it?”

Grand Cheat butted in.

“Hey, let me try this for once. I want to try killing the so-called strongest.”

“Shut up, mage. Can’t you tell when you need to stay out of things?”

Seeing how they say ‘for once’ and ‘always’, this didn’t seem to be their first murder.

In that case, they were below my [standard].

The Smelter tapped my head with the tip of his axe.

“Phew... old man, why did you act out so much? Are you stupid? Can’t you see my level? Ah, do you not know what a level is yet? You don’t speak English, do you?”

I knew all their abilities now.

“Ehei! Look up! I’ll split your head in two so that it won’t hurt.”

I stood up, grabbed Smelter’s babbling head, and turned it

around.

Crack.

“Eh...? Guys, ha, haha, since when were you in front of me?”

The four people's bodies froze.

I threw Smelter towards Steal More, and chopped off Grand Cheat's head with my axe.

I finished off Ultimate Quiver by throwing my axe.

The only ones left were Steal More, who was struggling to move under the body of Smelter, and Restore, who was trembling in a corner.

“W, what?! Fuck! Stop! Fuck! Don't come here! I'll stab you?!”

When I made my way towards Steal More, the boy raised his hand.

What was he planning on stealing this time?

As strength returned to my legs, I felt something inside me disappear. When I took a look into my status screen, I saw that my Xenoglossy ability had disappeared.

[Genuine Speech = Xenoglossy] – [Lv.1] Understand languages of other nations.

– [Lv.2] Understand the language of a different world.

“Eh? The fuck? I can’t? Why can’t I steal other things? This shouldn’t be possible?”

I could hear Steal More’s startled voice.

Of course he couldn’t steal them.

Those two other abilities were our family’s heirloom.

They were abilities created after generations of genetic modification, and controlled evolution.

There was no way a software would run, if the hardware was missing.

I, after having regained my strength, stepped on Steal More.

The boy made a funny sound akin to a squashed frog as he died.

There was only one left now.

When I turned, I could see Restore slide down onto the marble floor with a pale face.

A yellow liquid spilt out of her crotch.

I was thinking of getting Restore's help to get rid of injuries, in case I got any...

Restore lifted her arms defensively, and began to beg for mercy.

"I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm so sorry! So please! Stop!"

It almost seemed like she'd run out of breath at any moment.

"Just let me live, please? Let me live! I won't do it ever again! I'll live properly! I'll help people!"

The amount of tears and snot on her face was quite unsightly.

"Please forgive me! Please forgive me!"

How annoying. She was pulling on my leggings.

Plus, I had to kill her anyway. It'd be troublesome if she ever comes back for revenge.

I put Steal More's blood that was on my foot on my finger. Then, using the blood, I began writing questions on the ground in Korean.

1. Current location? Name, goal, number of people.
2. What is the aurora I see around me?
3. Personality and power? The way to use it? Price for using it?
4. Why am I here? Who brought me here?

Restore's teeth clacked in fear as she looked down on the questions.

"Korean? Are you Korean?"

I wonder if recovery was possible even when a neck got snapped?

"W-will you let me live if I answer? You'll let me live, won't you? Won't you?"

I nodded.

It was a lie, though.

“Eh... eh, so this is. Haze! Haze Republic! And this is a research center! So a research center is... a place where wizards experiment...”

She was all over the place.

“Purpose! Purpose is, is, to summon heroes from the other world!”

...Summon heroes?

“Eh... a-around... around... a hundred people?”

I pointed at the second question.

Restore seemed to become confused for a second.

“Aurora...? Light...? I don’t really under... I can’t really see... Ah! Ahh!! Could it be that you can see mana?”

So this aurora in my vision was mana?

I nodded, and pointed to the third question.

But right then.

I could hear claps behind me.

“Wow, your skill’s quite amazing. I knew I had the eye for people.”

Again, Korean.

“Ah!”

Restore let out more tears as she ran towards the sound.

“.....”

I couldn’t see a human shape, despite having turned to the location of the sound.

Was he hiding his mana?

The man seemed to be in his mid-twenties.

“Right right. You worked hard, you useless child.”

Restore seemed to be huggin this man.

“Ah, I’ll explain the rest for you. You don’t need the kid anymore, do you?”

I still couldn't see the man.

But I could see a black mana shape itself into a huge hand.

Its unnatural appearance brought forth interest to me for the first time in this world.

“Eh...? Big brother Necro?”

The hand grabbed hold of Restore.

This couldn't really be described with the expression of “grabbing”.

—Right, it's more like a snake coiling around its prey.

I saw the limbs of Restore bend in strange ways as she got swallowed by the black hand.

Crack, crrk, creak, krrrrr!

A strange orchestra played in front of me.

Red blood began to spill out from the black hand as Restore's body slowly broke.

“How grotesque. I've done this a lot, too. But the thing is, kids

like this just restore their bodies if you don't deal with them like this. I know pretty well, since I have someone like this near me. Ah, sorry for showing you some dirty things the moment we met."

Restore's body disappeared along with the black hand.

"I had no intention of pressuring you or anything? It wasn't like I had anything against the kid I killed, either."

The sound got closer to me. I could smell preservatives and chloroform in the air.

"Ah, quite handsome, aren't you. Nice to meet you. The name's Necro Kill."

I still couldn't see. Even though I could hear him right in front of me.

"What, you don't want to shake hands?"

I simply blinked.

"Ah, could it be that you're blind? No way? You killed five, no, four of these kids."

Silence ensued.

It seemed that he was trying to get some reaction out of me.

“...What, you can’t even talk?”

Necro sighed.

“How annoying. Can’t see, can’t talk. Are you supposed to be Helen Keller?”

My body was like this thanks to the electric chair.

“Annoying, annoying. Seriously. Hold on, wait. Right. O.K. What would be nice here~? Since you seem to be capable of telepathy, as long as I convert the ether to sound... Mn? Although you have a ‘body’, but not a ‘heart’?”

It seemed that he didn’t have any hostility.

After saying a few strange things under his voice for abit, Necro said “It’s done!” as he clapped his hands.

“Try speaking, then.”

Try—.

“Speaking? But my lungs...?”

It wasn't my original voice, but.

“Sound is coming out.”

Despite the fact that my vocal chords weren't moving, sound was coming out.

“Next are eyes... but, are you really blind? Seriously? Come on, you fought four people. You're playing with me, right?”

Was he planning on fixing my eyes?

“Can't see.”

Necro sighed.

“Should I really give you this... Well, damn, I don't really have a choice, do I. You might as well take it as a reward, I guess. Here, take it.”

I felt something come into my head.

[Floating Eye] – Rank: D+

– A demon eye that gets created at a location chosen by its owner. As long as it's within the range of the Floating Eye, one

can see anything around it freely.

A control panel of sorts appeared in my head.

Even though I didn't get any instructions on how to use it, I knew how to use it, just like an artificial limb.

When I pressed the "on" button, I was able to see a clear view on one corner of my vision.

It was the view of the sea.

Almost like a CCTV, isn't it...

If I try to look inside, then-

My vision flickered, and the view of the sea switched to a castle on a cliff.

I suppose this is kind of like connecting a VR device with a drone.

Was this a little above the equator?

When I looked around a bit and checked the clothes of the people and the leaves on the trees, it seemed to be autumn.

When I moved the eye to my current location, I could see a bloody floor.

On this floor was a half-naked beggar, and a man in a business suit.

I turned around, and checked myself out first.

...Disgusting.

It almost seemed like a disfigured clay doll was trying to stand with a hunched back.

The flesh on my body had melted due to the intense heat, and my hair had been burnt away as well.

The clothes I was wearing was a patient's robes.

The other side was wearing a black business suit.

Why was he wearing that?

Unlike his proper, business-appropriate clothes, he wore a skull ring on his fingers.

I had thought he'd look like a demon or something like in games due to his class as a ...

He looked normal. Too normal.

But it was definite that he was a being that was just like me.

Let's see...

Let's try seeing if it's possible to check out status screens using this Floating Eye.

When I tried to check Necro's information, a status screen appeared.

Status [Thirst][Hunger][Strength][Blessing]

Level 8 (EXP 94%)

Name Necro Kill (Korea)

Title Undertaker
Death Researcher

Class. Human

Pers. Disease of Death

Power Overdeath (Lv.4)

HP 95/95(+0)

MP 3,000/3,000(+0)

Attack 2(+0)

Spell 120(+50)

HP Regen. 0.5(+0)

MP Regen. 5(+0)

Defense 15(+0)

Magic Res. 20(+0)

Abilities

Xenoglossy (Lv.2)

Black Magic (Lv.9)

Demon Eyes

Oracle (Rk.S)

Dissection Eye (Rk.C)

Artifacts

Hero's Coffin (Rk.A-)

Equipment

Dragon Boots (Rk.D+)

Aquinad (Rk.C)

Inventory

Potion (x1)

Spellbook (x52)

Gebesh (∞)

Madman's Restraint (∞)

Spellstone (∞)

Bone Collector (∞)

Pain Chest (∞)

Chapter 4. The Immoral Act You Were Summoned To Do

Thirst? Hunger?

His HP was low for someone at level 8.

After looking at the Necro's equipment, I realized something.

If one's item did not have any stats, or an added effect, the item didn't show up in the status screen.

For example, normal t-shirts, underwear, or socks would not show up.

“Have you gotten used to your new additions yet?”

There were quite a lot more things that I would've liked to look at, but I probably didn't have the time for it.

“Thanks to you.”

I decided to observe the man while being as subdued as possible.

This was because ‘despite having this happen, no one came’.

Meaning, the current situation was totally under control.

Or, this was the ‘intended conclusion’.

“Thank my ass. How polite. By the way, this isn’t entirely free? You cleaned up the kids, and this is also an advance payment for something I’m going to ask you to do.”

There was a high chance of me being dead when I was summoned.

In other words, the man had summoned “me” as a target.

And he was also “desperate” enough to revive me.

But if I was that important, I surely would’ve been treated better than this.

“O.K. Alright. Now we can talk. Let me introduce myself again.”

Necro extended his hand to me.

“I am Necro, one of the wizards working for the Haze Republic.”

Necro Kill. [To kill a corpse].

We shook our hands.

“Cool name, don’t you think? I’m the one who summoned you here! As well as the one who revived you! Hahaha!”

His laughter was filled with pride and joy.

“Saying this makes me sound almost like a villain? How embarrassing.”

If one took blood and corpses out of the equation, the whole scene seemed almost light-hearted and fun.

Now it’s my turn to introduce myself, huh.

“Jin.”

I decided to use my family name, since I didn’t have an actual name.

“Jin? And?”

“Nothing else.”

I wasn’t lying.

“Oh dear. No name? Were you a part of an evil organization or something?”

Kind of.

“As for you, why are you called Necro Kill, despite being a Korean? Chuuni, perhaps?”

“Hey! Damn you! Chuuni my ass. This all has a reason, you know? Wizards aren’t supposed to reveal their true name, you know? If you know a wizard’s true name, you can do all sorts of stuff to their magic and existence itself. Get it?”

I didn’t get it.

“Don’t tell me you’re making up stories just because I have no name...”

“Ehei! That’s not the case at all!”

It seemed that the world of wizards was quite peculiar.

“Well, fine. I’ll tell you my name, but my surname, then. Just for politeness’ sake. But do try to forget it after you hear it, yeah?”

A name was just a name, after all.

“Seokil. O.K. I’ll stop there.”

“Kill because Seo’kil’?”

“Ah, I suppose it would work that way? Creative, aren’t you. Ah, I’m saying this just now, but it’s useless to know my surname? You can’t just know my name without knowing the meaning behind it.”

But I already got through that problem.

In this case, this was simply a case of breaking up a single character into multiple pieces.

“What a rare surname.”

Necro’s face stiffened.

“It’s Japanese if you read it backwards, too.”

I didn’t even need to check if I was right. The man’s reaction was quite something.

“Don’t worry. I won’t tell.”

“...I’m not gonna trust you, but seriously, don’t tell anyone that. Alright? In any case. It’s getting kind of awkward to just stay here, so-let’s go.”

Necro motioned me out the door.

“We need to get you through the proper motions. Gotta get you introduced to a few people as well. We can talk more as we move.”

I pointed towards the corpses.

“Those?”

“Ah, them? Don’t worry about it. It’s just trash anyway. Over there, that kid. He used to go around with a knife stabbing kids. Below him, was someone who stole other kids’ stuff and took out cash from his parents’ wallets. was someone who just cheated on every one of his tests. What do you think, they all deserved death, don’t you think?”

“Who knows.”

The problem lay in whether they could’ve ‘benefited me’.

“Oh~ how cool~”

Necro walked over to one of the corpses.

“Seriously, how nice. Just look at these sons of bitches. Isn’t the world quite a shitty place? To think shits like these could run wild after they come to this world.”

Necro crouched down next to Grand Cheat's split head.

“They don't even have shit in their brains, and yet they have the gall to call themselves geniuses.”

Necro took out a knife from his pocket.

It was a Chinese cleaver.

But instead of the usual plastic case it was contained in, it seemed to be covered in some dirty pieces of flesh.

“You think you're a wizard? You thought if a piece of trash in real life came over to this world, you would be a hero?”

Necro chopped off Grand Cheat's neck with the cleaver. The limbs convulsed a little bit as blood seeped out of the neck.

So he was pretending to be dead...

The kid used his ability to make the axe miss, and used his ability to make my eyes register a 'miss' as a 'hit'.

I should be more careful.

“The only thing they try to do is make their lives more comfortable. The abilities aren't even something they earned by

themselves, and yet they feel overly proud of it. See, there's too many people like these nowadays? Really, we should've held back on summoning people."

Necro put down the cleaver down on the ground, and stood up.

Only then did the creature within open its mouth, and let out a inhuman scream.

[Cannibalistic Butcher = Gebesh] – Rank: C-

- A butchering knife that came from a different world. It is a cursed weapon, so it is well-advised to take caution when using it. Gebesh chooses its owner.

- Those who gets cut by this knife begins to emit a delicious odor. This smell can be smelt even tens of kilometers away.

- The stomach of this beast is connected to a different dimension, allowing it to store a large quantity of meat without getting it to rot. The beast can throw up the meat inside whenever requested to do so by the owner.

Gebesh, who revealed its centipede-like legs, began to eat the flesh of Grand Cheat.

It almost looked like the flesh was being vacuumed into the beast.

So this is black magic...

“Let’s see. She was a member of the archery club, and that’s a cult member. Oh, you see that blood stain over there?”

I could see a black stain.

“These kids took one of their classmates and injured her, healed her, then injured her again. All for the sake of levelling up, they said. Seriously, is this something that a human should do?”

Level up...

It should be possible to level up like that if this world really was like a game.

“The kid had turned into a hedgehog by the time I found her corpse.”

The bow could’ve been made with Smelter’s ability, but what about the bowstring?

I adjusted the Floating Eye to observe the bow.

The bowstring’s color and shine was quite familiar.

Black and shiny, this was almost like...

A strand of hair...

She must've cut it off of her dead classmate.

"I asked them why they killed the student, and they said they weren't even at fault. In fact, they even said 'don't you just revive when you die?' Dear lord."

Necro laughed angrily.

"Do people's brains begin rotting when they come over to this world or something?"

"Who knows."

They must've been thinking something along the lines of this:

[Once you die, you revive. Therefore, death is no longer something of concern.] I don't agree with the idea that death is insignificant, but it does make sense that the students would think such a thing.

The existence of Necromancy proves life after death, and the theory of souls.

This means that reincarnation might actually exist.

Perhaps gods, ghosts, and monsters exist here as well.

Soon enough, the cleanup became finished.

When Necro extended his hand, Gebesh jumped into it like a happy puppy.

There were only skeletons left in the room.

Even those got eaten away by Necro's other tools.

The only proof that the kids from before existed in this world were the bloodstains on the room.

"We're done here. Let's leave. The rest can be cleaned up by my assistant."

Necro, who had been walking towards the exit, suddenly turned around.

"Ah, before that, mind if I ask a question?"

Does he have something left to do?

"It's a little strange coming from me, but why'd you kill them?"

They were youngsters, after all. Perhaps it would've been better for you to suck it up? Were you mad because they killed someone? Or because they tried to pick a fight? Or woke you up?"

It wasn't like I had an anger management problem. I wouldn't kill someone because of just that.

"No, it was because of Smelter."

Necro's eyebrows bunched up together after hearing my simple answer.

"Smelter? Did he pick a fight?"

"No, it was his 'ability'."

Necro seemed even more confused.

"Think about it. Smelter has the ability to extract metal from materials to create something, correct?"

"Correct."

"If that ability has time to mature, it should be able to mine various metals as well, don't you think?"

"Well... there is that probability, I suppose."

“It might bring harm to my ability, Heart of Gold. I don’t know what the ability is, but seeing how it has the word gold in it, I found it fitting to dispose of Smelter while I still could.”

Necro grinned.

“...Just because of that?”

“It’s important for ‘me’.”

Why couldn’t anyone understand?

Necro lifted his hands like an orchestra director.

“Right. Let’s get things straight. So. You felt that Smelter’s ability could endanger you in the future, so you killed him? Sort of like an investment?”

“Correct.”

Necro’s lips were trembling with excitement now.

“You’re crazier than me, aren’t you?”

“The doctor said I was fine.”

Of course, I was lying.

“Are we done here? I don’t want to waste any more time.”

I hurried Necro as I walked towards the door.

“Let’s go. For an adventure.”

“...Adventure?”

The kids spoke of ‘hero’ and were focused very much on levelling up. Plus, this was a different world.

Of course, this meant I would reach this conclusion.

“I already know why you brought me here.”

I could tell.

“We’re about to catch the Demon King, right?”

“Mn? No?”

...Eh?

“We already killed the Demon King?”

“...Kidding?”

“No joke.”

Necro the final blow towards my confused self.

“Ah~ you misunderstood, huh. Oh dear, there’s no going around it then, huh. Fine. I’ll tell you! Exactly why I summoned you here, O.K.?”

Necro grinned.

“Mr. Jin, you will, from this point on, come with me to kill the hero. How about it? Feel your heart beating yet?”

What...?

Chapter 5. Recognizing The Monster

It's been five minutes since we came out of the room.

We were still walking up.

We walked up spiral stairs that had no support, and walked through walls that seemed solid to the eyes.

“So?”

“So? What do you mean, ‘so’?”

Necro answered casually without even looking back.

“The reason why you're killing the hero. Is it simply because the hero is useless now?”

“Ah~ that? Well, there's that too, but... if I were to put it in simple terms, rebellion? It's a bit complicated. This country did all sorts of dirty stuff in the past.”

“It seems that the hero has quite a lot of followers.”

After all, the number of followers the hero had was able to start a rebellion.

“There’s a lot, yeah, but the real problem is that each and every one of them are at [brave class]. It’s quite annoying.”

It was easy to see how many would flock under the hero who saved the world.

“Just a hundred of them should be able to destroy this country? Let’s see... they should be able to rival a tactical nuke by themselves?”

Was it possible for a person to get that strong in this world?

I suppose I should just be thankful that they weren’t as strong as a strategic nuke.

A hero...

His level should be high, and his equipment should be high as well. Would someone like me be able to beat him?

Necro seemed to read my thoughts, and dismissed his previous statement.

“Ah! Sorry, sorry! A nuke is a little overkill. They should be like... an ICBM that isn’t carrying a nuke?”

A minute difference.

“But the [hero] is entirely different as well. You can compare these three like this.”

There’s the brave class, and there’s also braves themselves...

“Three?”

“Four... is a bit iffy... three. Three braves, and one hero. They have one mascot, but you don’t need to worry about that. It isn’t really a target either.”

“So that means I’d have to fight four people at once...”

“Hm? Ah~ I didn’t explain properly. The one who’s leading the rebellion is the hero. The others just... after defeating the demon king, they just went to do their own thing. You should know why we’re killing them, though? It would be good to get rid of potential threats before they become an actual threat.”

So they aren’t together right now... good.

“Well, I get it now. But still, I shouldn’t be able to fight someone like the hero by myself?”

I was curious about this the most.

“Shouldn’t I level up bit by bit if I’m to face the hero? Do we have

time for that?”

Despite the fact that I have a title of “History’s Worst Killer”, in the end I am but a normal human.

No matter what I do, I cannot defeat a missile.

Well, I could kill the operator, though.

“If I were to be honest with you, we don’t have much time? But there is this one thing called ‘power’ in our hands.”

So that was it.

The ability that gets bestowed unto an individual for the simple fact that they crossed over from a different world—

Smelter was able to change the form of whatever metal he touched, and Steal More could steal anything apart from a different person’s power.

An ability that didn’t require any effort or understanding to receive.

If an ability such as ‘murder by sight’ existed, there’d be no meaning in having differences in levels.

“You’re putting your expectations into my power? You don’t even know what it is.”

“That is true. But I can feel it. [Heart of Gold]. From what I’ve seen in this world, the more chuuni the name, the stronger its power.”

I couldn’t understand his grading standard.

“Chuuni power... well, fine. Can I learn how to use this power now?”

“Of course not! Please!”

Necro shouted out of surprise.

“We don’t even know what the ability does? Just wait till we get back to our shelter! It might be dangerous!”

Powers seemed to be as dangerous as it was beneficial.

Well, it wasn’t like it didn’t make sense, though.

If my power could control germs...

Or emit toxic amounts of radiation from my body... other people would be in danger.

I should try to find its power from somewhere safe.

“If you go there, some strange child will explain everything to you whether you want it or not, so don’t worry about it. Right now, we need to meet the prime minister.”

“Prime minister?”

This was a castle, though.

“Is this a constitutional monarchy?”

“Eh? How’d you know? I haven’t even told you.”

Was the the effect of otherworlders as well?

“This castle doesn’t seem to have electricity. Does this place not even have a generator of any sort?”

“Well, that’s what all fantasy worlds are, I guess. But hey, it’s not a total dump? They even have steam locomotives? Pretty good, don’t you think? Steampunk!”

The surroundings were quite dark.

I’ve tried looking around the castle with my Floating Eye, but

there didn't seem to be any source of power.

I bowed down, and passed by the low ceiling.

Necro, who was in front of me, was passing through a door about half his size.

When I tried to catch up, he waved me back.

“Take your time. Slowly, now. Ah, speaking of technology, want to know something fun? They don't even have internet here.”

“...That's a little troublesome.”

I stood back up after passing through the small door.

We were at the edge of a cliff.

Outside the window was the sea.

When I looked up, I could see an array of rib vaults like those in a cathedral.

“We're almost there.”

This was the eighth time I heard this already.

When I turned the corner, a group of maids who found me screamed.

They immediately looked down on the floor, and passed me by.

I could sense fear and discomfort from their faces.

Well... it is true that I don't look particularly human right now.

I wouldn't be surprised if I were to be mistaken as a monster.

“Don't worry about those girls. They were just screaming because you were so handsome. Just like they do in concerts, you know?”

His encouragement didn't help one bit.

“We're here.”

Necro walked towards the giant door in front of him in big strides.

When I walked behind him slowly, the guards in front of the door looked over me carefully.

I could feel animosity from them.

The two guards in front of the door crossed their spears in front of the door.

“Sir Necro, would you tell us the purpose of your visit?”

“Summoned being examination.”

The door opened in front of us.

The people who were inside turned around to take a look at the new addition to their group.

They all seemed to wear high-quality clothing.

I treated Necro as a shield of sorts as I walked in.

I could make out a large window, as well as a table filled with various documents.

The prime minister, whose hair was filled with bits of white, was looking over the documents here.

He didn't even look our way.

“You all seem to be quite busy?”

The prime minister looked up for a second, then looked back down on his table, as if he had no interest whatsoever.

On the other hand, the rest of the people in the room couldn't get their eyes off of me.

“What is that monster...”

“Disgusting.”

“Where'd Sir Necro get such a thing...”

The people either frowned, or put their hands to their mouths as if I smelled.

It was a clear sign of disgust.

And-

“You dare bring a monster into the prime minister's office?! Sir Necro! Did you really think I wouldn't recognize black magic?!”

A middle-aged man in militaristic uniform shouted this with all his strength.

The name displayed on his status screen was Winton Marcilis.

His level was 2. Other than that, no special features.

“Oh boy, you’re still going strong, aren’t you, coronel. To think you’d have strength enough to shout sooo loudly. You should reserve that kind of stuff for the mountains, though.”

Necro walked forward as he spoke tauntingly to the coronel.

“It’s no monster. It’s a hero that we summoned? Dear me, and he came from so far, too... please keep your voice down. Have at least a bit of respect. I mean, the prime minister’s right next to you, for goodness’ sake. You should just stop shouting like a bird, while you’re at it. No one’s deaf here, you know?”

The colonel spasmatiscally grabbed his sword.

His body began to shine.

In the short time when the people began to open their mouths,

The coronel crossed five meters in near supersonic speed.

It seemed that this was the result of body strengthening through the use of mana.

The coronel, who stopped in front of me, began to swing his sword at me like an angry lion.

It seemed that he was intending to strike my neck in one blow, but-

“...Nn?!”

He makes a funny sound, doesn't he.

I exerted a bit of strength into the blade that I held between my fingertips.

After all, I couldn't just keep it next to my neck forever.

K-kiii!

When I carefully moved the blade away from my neck, making sure that I didn't break it with too much strength, the colonel jumped sideways dramatically.

He could've just let go of the sword...

I was able to read some of the man's personality from that action alone.

A martial artist. Great amount of pride. Enough political power to be able to be with the prime minister.

“Kuuh!”

The colonel's face turned red.

He put in enough strength to make a vein pop, but the sword simply refused to move.

Of course, this was obvious.

Although the capabilities of my body lowered to something below ten percent, I was still a product of [Advanced Science].

Even now, I was able to neutralize everyone in this room in three seconds.

“You monster...!!”

How impolite.

“Colonel Winton! Just what do you think you're doing! You're pointing a blade at a guest!”

The baton got passed to Necro.

He probably wanted something like this to happen in the first place.

“Didn't you hear? This person was summoned. What would you

have done if you actually killed him? Do you even know how much this entire operation costs? Are you kidding me?”

The colonel flinched after hearing the word “cost”.

“Plus, if this person’s neck got chopped off, this place would get dirtied with blood, wouldn’t it? Were you trying to get the prime minister’s office dirtied or something? Since when were you a terrorist?”

The colonel let go of his sword after Necro’s criticism.

He took out a handgun instead, and pointed it at my head.

“Colonel Winton Marcilis.”

A deep voice rang out.

The colonel turned to the prime minister with prideful eyes.

“This man is a monster! If we don’t take care of him now, he might do something terri...!”

“Stop!”

The prime minister’s voice seemed to carry the nuance that he was tired of hearing the colonel’s voice.

“You seem to have gotten too much stress. Go rest. I’ll look over the matter about you fighting in the front lines.”

The colonel looked back at me with a red face.

His eyes were shining like that of a tiger’s.

To think he’d be like this just because I look like a monster...

Necro probably did some unfavorable things in the past.

Or a monster really is that dangerous.

I threw the sword back at the colonel.

Clang.

It seemed that I put in too little strength. The sword dropped on the floor, and not the colonel’s hand.

The colonel grit his teeth, ignored the sword on the floor, and walked towards me.

“I’ll put a bullet through your disgusting bald head one of these days...!”

He probably wouldn't have been like this if I looked like a cute girl.

“Be grateful you were able to live today, damn monster...!”

The colonel spewed threats from his mouth, and exited the room vilently.

Necro turned to look at the colonel's back, and grinned.

“Seriously, that man. He thinks a gun can do anything? He's just a wizard who failed to become one.”

Necro turned around once more to face the prime minister.

“Now it's quiet. Well, I'd like it if it was quieter, honestly.”

The prime minister, who was fiddling with the pen in his hand, looked over to the people at the side and spoke.

“...I'll take care of all your requests in the next two hours. Please leave the room.”

The people all let out complaints after hearing this, but exit the room anyway.

Now, there were just three people left in the room.

Chapter 6. The King Wishes For The Hero's Death

“Come closer. Yes, you too...”

I walked to the prime minister.

The documents on the table were piled so high that it was covering half of the man's face.

The language these documents were written in were all foreign to me.

The only reason I could read them was probably because of Xenoglossy.

“This one's quite interesting.”

The prime minister slowly looked over me.

I, too, observed him.

His skin that had been tainted with age didn't have any wrinkles in it. His eyes were filled to the brim with stress and exhaust.

“I already know how you got here. A corpse, eh... Nice to meet

you. You probably saw my name through the use of Oracle already. So, what's your level?"

Should I tell him?

When I looked over to Necro, the man stepped forward.

"Well, level isn't really important, is it? It's not like it's going to be the same as the hero's."

"So, what is it?"

Necro waved his hands without saying anything for a moment, as if he had become quite nervous. In the end, he opened his mouth.

"...1!"

A small change appeared in the prime minister's mouth.

"He managed to kill five level two kids even with that level? Why would level matter at that point anyway?"

Well, it is possible to catch higher-leveled monsters in video games as well, after all.

"You see, Oracle isn't really something that measures attack power, but... a growth potential... Right, you know one of those

things that estimate height for kids in puberty? It's just like that. You should know as well."

Is that so.

So that means that those five kids killed their classmate despite knowing that 'experience will not go up'.

"This person is... eh... right, a corpse. His level's one because he's a corpse."

Made sense.

I'm already dead. Since I can't even move, I can't harm other creatures.

Because of this, I am level one.

Perhaps the creator of Oracle didn't even expect something like this to happen?

My eyes met with that of the prime minister's.

"Since it's coming from you, I'll believe it. So this is a murderer who brutally slaughtered five children as soon as he got summoned."

There wasn't really a need to reaffirm that.

“Is he that valuable? Valuable enough to manipulate the conditions for summoning using your disciple?”

Necro raised his arms with a smile after hearing the minister's angry shout.

“Dennis is pretty dumb, you see. You must've mistaken it for manipulation. I'll deal with him later.”

That kind of excuse won't work at all...

“Sir Necro, this country isn't something that a single magician can deal with.”

That much is obvious, isn't it.

The hero created a rebellion, but they haven't made a move yet.

That just goes to show how strong the country was. It was powerful enough not to be taken down easily.

“The power the king of this country mustered is far greater than what any normal human might imagine. No matter what you're planning, just remember this one thing.”

“Yes, yes, of course!”

Necro looked playfully into the minister’s angry eyes.

The minister looked over the documents near him, then opened his mouth.

“...Right. If there are no problems, we can keep going like this. But do understand, we cannot afford to make any mistakes. I need to take a look at the card you have drawn myself. Do you have time today?”

Necro tilted his head in confusion after hearing the question.

“Didn’t you check out his skill yourself a while ago?”

“This isn’t enough. Right, it isn’t. That idiot who couldn’t even become a wizard... even if we had an army of him, we wouldn’t be able to take down the warrior.”

The idiot he’s speaking of should be the colonel.

So who’s the warrior? One of the hero’s friends?

“We’ll only get casualties if we try to fight with weaklings. It’d be far better to use elites.”

“There’s the 2nd Subjugation Battalion as well, there’s really no need...”

“Why would we need the special task force if we have the 2nd Subjugation Battalion, then? It’d be better to put you and the saint into the 2nd Subjugation Battalion.”

I quietly raised my hand.

“Uhm...”

The minister raised his head.

“What is it?”

“What about my opinion?”

The two’s faces stiffened.

“I came here because I became curious, but there’s no real need for me to get involved, is there?”

Necro’s eyes shook.

The minister’s noble expression didn’t shift one bit, but I could feel the surprise within his eyes.

Necro and the minister quickly exchanged looks together. Then, for some reason, they both grinned.

“I’m sure I don’t need to tell you this, but... you’re dead.”

I immediately understood where he was trying to get at.

“I’m not an expert on magic, but it’s not very hard to imagine what would happen if Necro stopped providing energy into your body. In fact, you should stop moving completely after a short period of time. Am I wrong?”

“No, you’re completely correct! Ah~ as expected of the prime minister!”

Necro turned my way after giving the prime minister two thumbs-ups.

“Right~ I’m the one who’s in control of your battery right now? You’d last about a week like this, but after that, then what? You’re a corpse, you understand? A corpse. But if you help me, I can consider reviving you.”

Revival? Was such a thing possible?

“Just look at me. Anything I say, I can do. I just have to put your soul into a fresh body, you know? I’m the strongest black magician in the world. What, don’t you trust me?”

It was hard to make a decision due to my lack of information.

“So you’ll revive me once I take down the hero and his braves?”

The prime minister responded.

“Of course. In fact, we’ll even reward you. You can take the money from Sir Necro.”

It’s hard to believe...

But it wasn’t like I had a choice.

If I decide to step out of the game here, all there was left for me was destruction.

“...Fine, I’ll do it. Oh, and one last thing.”

“What? What is it?”

“You called this a ‘rebellion’, but I haven’t heard why such a thing happened. I want to hear why you want to kill the hero.”

The hero was a symbol of justice. He was the one who defeated the demon king to save the world. In other words, an idol.

If one were to kill an idol like this, the backlash would be incomparably big.

The killer would be assaulted by those who revered the hero 24/7.

I needed a reason to fight. After all, a battle without reason was a loss from a start.

But even after much waiting, I didn't get an answer.

Was it a sensitive question, after all?

They asked the hero to kill the demon king, and now they're trying to kill the hero...

There was no worse form of repayment.

At least, this was the case from a standard viewpoint of the world.

The minister tapped the table for a moment, then pointed to a chair in the corner.

“This is going to be a long story. It'd be good to sit down.”

Once I brought the chair and sat on it, the minister leaned back

on his chair.

“Where should I start... right, the base of this nation, and the story of its creation should do well.”

The minister started here.

“The creator of this nation was a wizard called the Rainmaker. The name we derived from this to name our nation was the word ‘Haze’. Of course, this is all just legend, and the first true king of this nation was a simple boy living next to the sea.”

Rhoden.

He was a son of a fisherman.

He, who showed his talent for magic at the age of thirteen, got noticed by a certain wizard and managed to enroll in a school of magic.

He fully displayed his talents there, and managed to create multiple forms of summoning magic.

The one who stopped him was the demon king.

The red star of destruction, [Mirage Belt].

The world neared the brink of destruction under him, the 'oldest evil'.

Many people attempted to defeat this evil, but all perished in the end.

Here, Rhoden came up with an idea.

If no one from their world could fight the demon king, they might as well get help from a different world.

After much effort, he managed to form a contract with the [Master of Chaos], and began trying his hardest to master a certain form of magic.

Bessica Pisces.

The forbidden magic to bring in beings from different worlds.

As expected of a forbidden magic, the summoned hero was extremely powerful.

He managed to use magic however he wanted, and shocked the world.

He split the earth in two, created magical islands, and created mechanical spiders for transportation.

But after defeating the demon king, the hero disappeared.

Some said he died.

Others said he went back to his world.

No one knew the truth.

The problem came after this-

“You guys got addicted to summoning heroes?”

“That’s a bad way to put it. Just think. The people who crossed over from other worlds all attained an ability without even crossing the border of life and death. Abilities that others would only dream of getting after decades of training! Here’s a way to attain great military power easily, so why stop doing it altogether after one try?”

If there was a problem, they would summon someone to fix that problem. Eventually, summoning itself became a problem.

But apparently, there wasn’t much trouble in the initial stages of this.

Since most of these people longed for something akin to fantasy, they became content with living in a place like this.

Some people even claimed that this was a part of the storyline, and told the country that they'd find a way to live on their own.

Well, after all, back then, there was no danger in the world. Everything was peaceful.

The problem came when the demon king revived.

Monsters began to multiply.

Food shortages began to happen.

Wars became common, and summoned peoples became conscripted into armies.

If this was a peaceful world, there wouldn't have been a problem.

“When troubling times began, those from different worlds began to beg to be sent back. Of course, this was impossible.”

The summoned people from other worlds became frightened when their rights were taken away, and planned to start a rebellion.

Some of them got killed brutally as a result.

Their families got executed and stoned in the public square.

This was when it was created.

The rebellion, that is.

“...Is there really no way to go back?”

“We can trigger the magic circle no problem, but we have no idea how it works.”

Necro answered this question.

“But if the hero defeated the demon king, he should’ve have had a good relationship with the nation?”

The prime minister stayed silent for a bit, then responded without showing any change in emotion.

“The situation was quite dire at the time, so... we hid some facts. The others just misunderstood several things afterwards.”

So they were fooled.

And by the time they realized it, they couldn’t do anything about it.

“Is it fine? It doesn’t look like killing the hero and his comrades

would finish everything.”

An army of summoned people...

In other words, an entire army of modern people with special abilities.

When the prime minister heard my worries, he grinned like a sly fox.

“Oh, it would. Everything would be finished.”

“How so?”

“Do you seriously think that our country would be afraid? Of one hundred brave-class men? And the million people that rallied under them?”

The prime minister sneered.

“Of course we wouldn’t be afraid. That much power is something that even we have. What we’re truly afraid of are the ones who can fight the nation by themselves, the hero and the braves. As long as people like those exist, no ruler in the world would be able to sleep peacefully.”

Was that so.

“In any case, the hero and his braves were set to die from the beginning.”

The kings of this world desired the death of the hero.

After his death, the kings would somehow justify it with false rumors.

“I feel that I’ve explained enough... so, what will you do? I’ll ask for the last time. Will you bail, or will you side with the majority?”

What should I do?

I took a look at my ten fingers, and measured my gains and losses on a mental scale.

Should I side with justice, or should I side with profit?

The answer was far too obvious.

Chapter 7. The World Is Ruled By Idiots And Evil

The carriage exited the castle, and began its journey downhill.

Ten minutes after travelling through a forest, an eerie prison building came into view.

Of course, this was a more poetic way of putting it. This was the shelter that Necro had spoke of.

The walls covered in barbed wires separated the shelter from the outer world completely.

At the top of these walls, soldiers guarded the surroundings carefully with their rifles.

“You’re not planning on imprisoning me here, are you?”

Necro responded hurriedly to my light joke.

“Imprison? Imprison who? We’re just here to test something real quick. Well, but then again, you should be kind of familiar in a place like this as a murderer, right? Kind of like coming back home during a holiday?”

“Not at all.”

I turned backwards before I went into the shelter.

When I looked down using the floating eye, I could see the castle below on the cliff, along with the horizon.

The current season was fall, but the shores looked quite a lot like winter.

“That is?”

I pointed at the colonel.

The man who had stomped out of the castle was now following us.

“Ignore him. The man’s in a different battalion in the first place.”

“Battalion?”

“He’s the leader of the first Subjugation Battalion, and I’m the leader of the special task force.”

I had heard a little bit in the office already, but it seemed that the military was getting involved.

They were planning on expending a fraction of the military engaged with the rebellion to take out the hero and the braves.

But... did they have a bad relationship?

Why did the braves not get together with the hero?

If they were friends who shared moments of life and death together, it was obvious that they'd join the rebellion.

How strange this was.

I walked into the shelter with Necro, and took a look around.

What a modern design...

They said they summoned quite a lot of people from different worlds. Did they let those people build the shelter by themselves?

There was a path up in the second floor for guards, and an area for prisoners existed on the first floor.

“Preparations?”

One of the soldiers responded to Necro's question.

“It's done. Six is ready.”

What were they talking about?

“Ouch!”

I fell down dramatically as I looked somewhere else.

“What in the world are you doing? Are you bored or something?”

“...It’s nothing.”

I realigned my sight to in front of me, and stood up.

My joints seemed to be stiffening, which made it hard for me to walk.

Well, that wasn’t really what made me fall, though.

“Just where did you pick up an invalid like this, huh?”

When the colonel made fun of my fall, Necro snuck a look backwards at me.

[That son of a bitch. I would’ve beat him up if it wasn’t for the fact that he’s one of my comrades. Don’t worry about it. Just take it for now.] ...This is?

The man wasn't speaking.

His voice was being transferred directly into my head.

[Ah, sorry, sorry. Forgot to tell you about it. It's called soul comms. Er, it's like telepathy. You know what that is, right? Telepathy? It's kind of like that.] I'll need to get myself a dictionary when I get the chance.

There were too many things that I didn't know in this world.

“Now~ looks like everyone's here. Shall we begin?”

Necro nodded to the soldier next to him.

“Bring them in.”

The soldier turned around, and fiddled with the mechanism on the wall.

Chrr! Drr! Chwaa! Drrr!

With a sound of metal chains moving, the door in front of us opened.

“To the center! Move! Move!”

The first person to appear was a trembling woman.

Without a doubt, she was a commoner.

Seeing how she was still wearing her normal clothes, and seeing how her face was covered in tears... she must've been kidnapped here or something.

A child, a girl, an old man and an old woman moved to the center with the woman.

“Eh... what you are to do from this point is ve~ry simple.”

Necro pointed to the people in the center.

“Show us your skills. Of course, I saw already, but the higher-ups want to see it, too? You've done something like this already. Just let loose.”

I looked up.

I could see officials above clinking glasses of alcohol with each other.

The one wearing the crown should be the true king of this country.

By seeing the prime minister's servile smile up above, I could see just what was going on in this country.

The king controlled everything while having a powerless prime minister pretend to be in charge.

Because as long as he did this, he would be able to avoid the citizens from starting a revolution.

If the citizens lack the power to find out the truth, they would feel free even when caged inside a physical prison.

“Hah...”

I facepalmed.

Just why was it that the majority of the world was filled with idiots and evil..?

Winton Marcilis.

The leader of the First Subjugation Battalion.

As a person who took part in taking down the Demon King with the hero, he managed to gain recognition from the king to get to this spot.

Winton was a person who managed to experience much battle as he fought with the hero.

‘That visage filled with charisma isn’t something a person who hasn’t seen the hero from up close can understand!’

This was something he often said before the hero began the rebellion.

The only reason why he applied for the subjugation this time was to secretly help out the hero.

“Ouch!”

The clown in front managed to fall down by himself.

He was surprised when the clown blocked his strike with a finger, but that was probably thanks to Necro’s powers.

‘They must be joking. Kill the hero? With that invalid creature?’

He was filled with rage.

“Just where did you pick up an invalid like this, huh?”

He had received the report as well.

The person summoned this time was a murderer.

The fact that this trash was trying to kill the hero was disgusting in the first place, but the fact that the trash was supposed to be the strongest murderer was just ridiculous.

He couldn't even laugh.

The title of strongest was only reserved for the hero.

'I cannot accept this!'

He couldn't accept it, he couldn't approve of it, he couldn't forgive it.

How dare that clown try to kill the hero...!

"Eh... what you are to do from this point is..."

The clown was listening to Necro's explanation.

His white, cooked eyes hid the fact that he was looking anywhere, which frightened the colonel.

"Show us your skills. Of course, I saw already, but the higher-ups want to see it, too? You've done something like this already. Just

let loose.”

Necro’s head bent backwards strangely as soon as he stopped talking. It was almost as if he took a gunshot to the head.

“Sir Necro...?”

Seeing how eccentric the man normally was, Winton assumed that this was all normal behavior.

But as he saw Necro’s knees bend over with blood coming out of his forehead, he pulled out his pistol.

‘Just what..? Did someone with an ability attack? When? Where? How?’

The clown stood still in front of Necro motionlessly. It was almost as if it felt nothing at Necro’s death.

Winton pointed the gun at the clown.

He didn’t have proof, but he felt that the entire situation was the clown’s work.

‘Did he use his... ability?’

Winton denied his theory immediately.

He wasn't a wizard, but he could still see mana.

He would've noticed if the clown used its ability.

“Eh? Necro! What's wrong! Somebody, help!”

A soldier who heard the clown's voice of desperation immediately went out to find help.

At this moment, Winton doubted his suspicion.

‘Is the clown not related? Was this all my misunderstanding? All resulting from my emotions?’

When he thought this much, he became confused.

If he killed the clown now, his fame would suffer, and so would his opinion of the king.

Winton quickly approached the clown.

If it wasn't for the fact that the clown ‘fell’ earlier, Winton wouldn't have gotten the impression that the clown was simple a ‘slow’ being.

And.

“Enemy attack! We need to get out..!”

Winton became confused once again when he extended his hand towards the clown's arm.

‘Why am I looking up at the ceiling?’

The wall on the other side began to melt down like a hot marshmallow.

‘Just what... is...’

Even to the point when he lost consciousness, he did not understand.

The man who couldn't become a wizard till the end didn't realize how he died.

He thought this as more brain fluid spilled out of his head.

I took the pistol from the dead colonel's body.

At the same time, I praised myself for acting pretty well this time.

As expected, acting out emotions was hard.

Ding.

I raised my head, and looked for an exit nearby using my floating eye.

The prime minister and the king had already been evacuated.

Of course, I wasn't at all interested in chasing after them.

For now, my top priority was to get out.

No need to keep the king as an hostage.

Click.

I checked how much ammo I had, and hid myself.

I could hear boots coming closer and closer. The number was four.

Three had guns, and one had a sword.

Why didn't they all use the same weapons?

Did the swordsman use his weapon that well?

Or was he like the colonel in that—

I put out my hand, grabbed hold of one of the soldier's neck, and broke it immediately. I began to use his body as a shield.

As expected of experienced soldiers.

They began shooting without surprise despite having one of their comrades die.

Tadadada!

The dead soldier's body danced from the bullets hitting it.

They responded quickly, but as I thought, people's minds seemed to shake a bit from death.

It would've been a lot better for them to save their shots to aim for my vitals.

Click! Click! Click!

The bullets ran out in 1.5 seconds.

The soldiers pulled on their triggers without any effect.

I threw the dead body towards the soldier with the shield, and put a bullet through each of the soldiers with the guns.

Now, there was one person left.

The man with the sabre began to increase killing intent with a bloodied face.

This was it.

His body was pitifully weak, but when his body began to shine, he became able to exhibit inhuman speed.

I wonder how much sturdier he became?

I tried shooting at his arm after dodging his first strike.

Clang!

The bullet bounced back with a steely sound.

So it isn't just his physical capabilities that gets an upgrade...

The light that surrounded his skin was thin and almost invisible, but it was already this strong.

If I focused a bit, I could see the mana flowing in his veins.

...Maybe I should've learned how to use mana before I killed Necro?

I regret not doing that far too late, as I shot at the soldier's head.

What I truly aimed for, though, were his legs.

Crack!

His shin bent backwards.

Because he focused so much of his mana to the top of his body, the defenses of his legs were weak.

Well, I'd have broken it even when it had proper protection.

The soldier fell backwards, and began to try and crawl away.

He had thrown away his sword as he desperately moved his arms forwards.

I stepped on the young man's neck, so that he wouldn't be able to run.

“Urgh! Urghhh!”

He began to struggle with tears in his eyes.

He must want to live.

He must be sad that this was how he was to go.

I understand.

I understand perfectly.

I killed him instantly, so that he wouldn't feel pain.

I had found the escape path already using my floating eye.

I just needed to get out now.

According to Necro, I have a week left.

I'll have to find a wizard who can extend my life before that.

I turned a corner, and immediately froze after seeing a girl standing like a guardian in front of me.

At the center of the exit, a brown-haired girl was taking in the warm sunlight.

She seemed to be a high schooler based on her age-

Status [Diseased][Weak][Blessing]		
Level 9 (EXP 9%)	HP	19,500/19,500(+0)
Name Morto Hai (Germany)	MP	5,000/5,000(+0)
Title Saintess of Savior	Attack	0.2(+0)
No Violence	Spell	130(+0)
Saintess	HP Regen	150(-30)
Class. Human	MP Regen	5(+0)
Pers. Ahimsa	Defense	14(+0)
Power Love & Peace (Lv.6)	Magic Res.	30(+0)
Abilities		
Total Recall (Lv.7)	Xenoglossy (Lv.2)	
White Magic (Lv.9)		
Demon Eyes		
Oracle (Rk.S-)		
Equipment		
Devourer Ring (Rk.D+)	Dragon Boots (Rk.D+)	
Ouroboros (Rk.D+)		
Inventory		
Frog Wallet (∞)	Fairy King's Pledge (∞)	
Dragon Boots (∞)	Full Bloom (∞)	
Murderer (∞)		

Dangerous.

My body immediately sent out warnings towards me.

I took the wrong path.

I shouldn't have met 'that'.

Before I get noticed, I need to get out...

“Would you happen to be Mr. Murderer?”

The saint who found me raised her hand.

“Hey! Hi! Nice to meet you! My name's Morto Hai! In short, you can call me haihai?”

She winked.

“.....”

I couldn't move my body, just like a frog looking into the eyes of a snake.

“Eh? No way this didn't work?”

The saint threw me a wink once again.

She even added a strange sound effect with her mouth.

I took this chance and-

Crack! Krrr!

After traversing five meters in one step, I broke her ribs and pierced her skin.

The saint's smile immediately scrunched up into that of pain.

With this attack, I secured my victory.

I grabbed hold of her beating heart.

And.

“Caught it.”

I didn't say it.

Crack! Krrr!

The saint performed the same technique as me upon my body.

Huoo!

A blue flame came out of the hole in my body.

Pain, something that was supposed to not exist in this corpse of a body, flared across my entire body.

Why..?

I endured the pain, and looked down on the saint's body.

Her clothes were turning red from massive blood loss.

How was she still alive?

“Ahahaha, ahahahaha♪. You're quite the idiot, Mr. Murderer. To think you'd have the gall to grab onto a lady's chest like this... perverts need to be punished, don't you think?”

The saint's smiled as blood ran down her mouth.

She then lifted her right arm.

A smell of magnolia spread as her brown hair fluttered in the air.

“Shining-”

Her hand began to shine in white.

The faint light immediately turned into a blinding one after taking in an immense amount of mana.

So this is it for me...

The bright light erased the world around me, and left just me and the saint's.

The blinding color of white made me think of one thing with a smile.

Of course this is the end for villains.

“Buster—!!”

The entire world turned white along with the saint's bright voice.

Chapter 8. Power And Personality

Sector 1 of the shelter, where the battle had previously occurred.

The soldier who had his head smashed in only had his lower jaw still intact.

His red tongue that had become completely exposed to the outside was dangling powerlessly on the ground.

Whoosh.

Wind came in through the open doors of the room.

The tongue that the wind touched began to move slightly.

At the same time, the destroyed brain matter on the floor began to tremble.

The eyeballs popped out of their sockets, and rolled on the floor.

Not long after this happened, a black matter above the corpses began to form a whirlpool of sorts.

A skeleton was formed first.

The brain and the intestine took its place, and blood veins began growing like tree roots.

Nerves reconnected, and the joints and muscles of the body stuck together.

The flesh from the dead bodies in the area was reconstructing an entire human body.

[Immediate Revival = Overdeath].

It was an ability that allowed its user to revive using the corpses in a 100km vicinity.

“God damn~ I ruined my style.”

Necro, who had recovered his appearance before his death, cracked his neck.

“Is he a modified human or what? How did he manage to do all that without any mana..? Dear me.”

Who would’ve expected something like this?

The murderer had pierced through Necro’s head with just a ‘fingernail’.

This wasn't something that was possible, if one took into account the strength of humans and the strength it would take to achieve such a feat.

“Things would've gone crazy if he got summoned just five years earlier.”

Necro recalled the time when the murderer killed the children.

The man was already dead, couldn't feel anything, and was riddled with status effects, and yet...

He still managed to easily kill level two ability users with a smile on his face.

“Monsters really are monsters, huh.”

He understood now.

He understood the vicious void within that smile.

If one were to be more accurate, it wasn't even a smile.

“It” just imitated a human.

That creature was just something that resembled a human.

If it was in the past, he never would've realized it.

After all, back then, Necro was just a man smarter than the average person.

If he hadn't awoken to his power...

“Ah. Hah-dear me. I should really stop thinking about stupid things. Oh my, so cold! I should go get some clothes. How embarrassing is this? I look like a total pervert.”

Necro shivered as he took off clothes from the corpse that used to previously be him.

Was I dead?

A stupid question.

I couldn't make sense of my current state, as I was already dead.

My body's status is...

I was a little relieved after seeing my status screen.

5 health left.

Looks like the girl decided to let me live.

I modified the floating eye to check my current situation.

...Not good.

My body was wrapped with bandages, and my arms were restrained with a straightjacket.

“Hup!”

The straightjacket didn’t break even when I tried.

Must be special-made.

I gave up on escaping quickly, and took a look around.

A relatively large place made out of gray concrete.

On one corner of this place was a wooden table, and two sofas facing each other.

I found a familiar face there, and widened my eyes in surprise.

“Hey! You’re awake, then?”

“...Necro Kill?”

He should’ve been dead, though?

“What a nice face. You thought I was dead, didn’t you? Correcto! Of course I died. How would I stay alive after having my brains blown out?”

Necro tapped on his forehead several times.

“Thanks to that, I was really confused even after I revived, you know? How I died, and why I died. I didn’t get that no matter how much I thought?”

Necro stood up from his sofa, and walked over to my immobile body.

“Why’d you go and do that? I thought we had a pretty good thing going on between us? Did you dislike the floating eye that much?”

I think I understood now.

So this was the man’s ability.

I don’t know the specifics, but it probably allows him to revive.

Under special conditions, at least.

“Why aren’t you answering? I thought I gave you the ability to talk?”

Necro squatted down next to my head, and put his hands on my shoulder.

His mana began to flow.

The bandages around my body began to emit a holy light that enveloped me comfortably.

A normal person would’ve been comforted by this light, but.

“....Geh, hyak! Hack!”

As my nerves revived, the horrid feeling of life swept towards me.

The pain that I felt was akin to having my skin burned, my intestines cracked, and my bones turn to dust–

I couldn’t breath.

“How is it? Does it hurt? It hurts a lot, doesn’t it? Yeah~ it probably does. See, as long as I pour in some mana, I’d be able to

activate the white magic that heals people stored in these bandages.”

Necro pushed down my shoulder as he continuously injected mana.

“Since these bandages are restoring a dead person’s nerves, it allows you to feel pain.”

I could smell rot, and taste some filth in my mouth. My blurry eyes got filled with light, and blinked out again like a broken fuse.

“Oh! Ohaha! Yah~ you seem to be in a lot of pain. Don’t the burns on your body make you feel like you’re burning to death right now?”

My back soared upwards into the air, daring to break itself in half.

“Since your lungs aren’t normal, either, you must be suffocating as well? The pain of not being able to breath! Oh, and haven’t your smell revived as well? The odor of death is quite something, isn’t it? Ah, but the true icing on the cake must be your tongue. Enjoy the taste of your rotting tongue.”

About three minutes.

“Well~ let’s stop here.”

The light faded as Necro stopped injecting mana into the bandages.

Necro tapped my shoulder lightly, and stood up with a smile.

At the same time, the restraints on my arm were taken off.

“Let’s call it even, yeah? No hard feelings. After all, you killed me too, didn’t you? Doesn’t this put us on even grounds? Let’s just... forget about the past! Start anew, you know what I mean?”

I suppose I had no choice in this matter.

“...Fine.”

“Phew~ I’m glad you accepted. Right, a good person should be at least this generous. See, I was planning on torturing you until you said yes.”

Necro grinned.

“We’re cool now, yeah? I don’t think we can quite become BFFs at this point, but I suppose we can be friends who killed each other at one point. Ah! I’m talking too much. I forgot to introduce someone to you.”

Necro turned around, and clapped twice.

“Oi! We’re done here! You can come back in!”

As soon as Necro said this, a thick, metal door opened itself.

“Excuse me!”

The one who came in with a bright smile was the saint.

“The famed white magician, Morto Hai, is now here!”

That strange pose is... was she practicing?

“Are you alright now, Mr. Murderer?”

The saint walked closer with a smile on her face.

Morto Hai.

‘Life and Death’, in Latin and Hebrew.

“Mm? Your eyes are healed?”

The saint said this as she looked over my face.

Her face resembled that of a squirrel searching for food.

“You can see well now, right? As I thought, Full Bloom really does work well?”

...So it was this idiot's item?

“Hey, I'll be leaving the rest to you?”

Necro straightened out his clothes as he said this near the exit.

“Tell him about his power first. Tell him the dangers and the advantages of using it. Ah! Tell him about your power as well. Don't get eaten up like last time again.”

“Pfft! You worry too much.”

“In any case, take care of yourself, alright? I'll be going, then? If something happens, just contact me.”

“Bye bye~”

“Sure, sure~”

The two seemed to share a relationship like an uncle and his niece.

Once Necro went outside, the saint bowed down directly above my head.

Her long hair almost threatened to tickle my nose.

“Alright then, Mr. ero ero Murderer. There’s just two of us now.”

She must be able to see my name using Oracle, and yet she still calls me Mr. Murderer...

Plus, that ‘ero ero’ prefix gets on my mind as well.

“Mn? Why aren’t you saying anything? Hah! Could it be...”

The saint hugged her scanty breasts with her arms.

“I may be a beautiful girl, but please don’t think perverted thoughts about me! I’ll sue you!”

Beautiful girl, eh...

“Not interested.”

The saint, after hearing this, covered her mouth with a gasp.

“C-could it be... Y-you... N... Necro...”

The saint balled up her fists, as if she had become deeply offended by something.

Her cheeks flushed red as she tried to say something.

A personality that would match up quite well with this person would be a funny, light-hearted one.

I thought of the type of person I'd have to act out in the future, and instead of replying to the saint's nonsense, stood up.

"I thought this the first time I saw you, but you really are quite small."

I could see a tiny head right below me.

"I wonder if I can throw you away as recyclable trash if I crush you like this?"

"Um... your inner thoughts are spilling out, it seems?"

"I said it so that you could hear it."

The saint grasped her chest with mock pain on her face.

"You were going to tell me about me power, right? Let's go seat

there.”

My body’s condition had improved.

Even though it had hurt, the Full Bloom item’s effect was to heal. The torture that Necro imposed on my body actually healed me.

“This is pretty nice, isn’t it.”

The saint sat down on the opposite side of me with a grin as she kept spouting nonsense.

Just what was she so happy about?

Everyone I’ve met so far had expressed disgust towards me.

“Stop saying nonsense, just tell me what I need to know.”

“Yes, yes~ but before that.”

Her voice sank.

“Can we talk about the people you’ve killed, Mr. Murderer?”

The saint calmly continued speaking.

“It’s been six hours since you’ve come to this world. You’ve killed eight, and attempted to kill two.”

The murder attempt was on Necro and the saint.

“I can’t help but ask you, just what do you think of human life?”

Doesn’t really matter if it’s worth anything or not, does it.

“It couldn’t be helped. I was commanded to kill innocents, after all.”

“What about the guards, then? Did they deserve to die?”

“Of course they did. They shot their guns at me. If they began shooting, it must’ve meant that they were ready to face death.”

“You went overboard, Mr. Murderer. With your skills, you should’ve had enough power to take care of all these people without killing them.”

“Well, is there a reason to leave people alive, thereby putting your own life at risk?”

“If you just... regarded human life as something more precious...”

Boring.

Instead of saying my thoughts out loud, I lied faithfully.

“I’ll try to do that in the future.”

The saint sighed.

“...Fine, we’ll end it here.”

She closed her eyes, then opened them again after a short moment of thought.

“We’re both busy people, you and I, so we’ll start immediately. First, let’s talk about the existence of power.”

The saint reached for a flower pot on the table.

“Everything has a ‘beginning’, and every existence has a ‘reason’. All living things have a Personality. There are those who wish to live, those who wish to simply survive, or those who wish to help others.”

Blue lightning arced across the saint’s forehead, and created a crown of light on her head.

“The reason of existence, psychology, rules, goals... If those are what makes up your Personality,”

When the saint touched the wilted flowers, it slowly began to come back to life.

It's petals were restored, and its stalks became full of life again.

“Once your soul evolves to turn your personality into something tangible, a power is created.”

A window appeared in front of me.

[Salvation = Love & Peace] – Takes on the pain and injuries of others for yourself.

– [Lv. 1] Take on the pain and injuries of others for yourself.

– [Lv. 2] Take on the poisons and diseases of others for yourself.

– [Lv. 3] Take on the misfortunes and curses of others for yourself.

– [Lv. 4] Take on the age of others for yourself.

– [Lv. 5] Take on the death of others for yourself.

– [Lv. 6] Take on the sins of others for yourself.

“So in other words, you just slave away for other people.”

“What did you say?”

The saint balled up her left hand with a kind smile.

“Nothing.”

Her hands trembled as she cleared her throat.

“Let’s continue. power is something that the soul creates to materialize your Personality. It’s often confused with psychic powers, but psychic powers only make use of the strength of your soul. Any wizard can use it. Like this.”

The saint extended her hand.

A small stream of light came out of it, and wrapped itself lightly around the flower pot.

The flower pot was then lifted up to my eye level.

If I couldn’t see mana, it would’ve looked like the flower pot lifted by itself.

The saint put down the flower pot back onto the ground.

“Tada~!”

“.....”

“Hoho~ you’re a shy one, huh? But I get it. I understand your feminine shyness!”

“Shut up.”

The saint just stood there dumbly in shock for a second, then grasped her chest with a loud “kuh!” once again.

“H-hnngh! That attack just now hurt quite a bit!”

The saint looked at me with a breathless face.

“Just finish explaining. So in short, power has a ‘uniqueness’ about it unlike psychic powers?”

“...Kuh! Correct. Each person gets one power. There are no same powers in the world, either.”

“It looked like other summoned people could use their power?”

“Yes. All can use it. Ah! Of course, in this world, there are people who worked for a long time to awaken their powers. About one in a million, I think?”

The explanation just kept getting more and more ridiculous.

“Are you an idiot?”

The saint seemed to be a little confused.

[Love & Peace].

This ridiculous ability forces its user to sacrifice her life force for others.

I don't know the conditions to get it to level up, but the fact that it is level six would mean that she used it quite a bit.

Enough to earn her the title of the saint–

This idiot thought that saving other people was a normal thing to do, and must've 'saved' a countless number of people in the process.

How stupid.

To think that she'd work so hard for something as worthless as 'other people'.

"Idiot saint."

"My patience bank is about to file for bankruptcy, you know?"

The saint's peaceful face began to crack a little.

"I'll say this here and now. I am not an idiot. I am Morto Hai. Call me by that name."

The saint said this with a kind smile, and added one more thing with a glare.

"Idiot murderer."

Grrr.

Raaawr.

A predator.

This idiot was a polar opposite of me.

I couldn't accept it. I couldn't take it. I could only deny it.

Such a worldview was wrong.

The one thing that is worth the most in this world is yourself.

No one else matters more than you yourself.

If you deny this fact,

If you slowly chip away at your life due to altruism,

You might be able to save everyone, but not be able to save yourself in the end.

Chapter 9. Heart Of Gold

“Idiot saint.”

“Stupid murderer.”

The conversation got nowhere, and I only got more annoyed.

It wasn't like I could just keep glaring at her, though.

Let's try to change the topic.

“Fine, I'll apologize first. Let me just ask you something...”

“What is it?”

She had a sour look on her face.

“Oh~ so even a genius like you has things you don't know? As an idiot, I don't really know if I can answer you properly?”

A high school girl who was unfazed by a murderer in front of her.

Well, it was obvious that she wouldn't be afraid, really.

After all, she beat me once already, and her HP pretty much forbid her from dying.

“At least you can tell me where we are?”

The saint pouted, and spoke in a sulky voice.

“It’s an underground containment room.”

“Containment room?”

The saint pointed at me and shouted, as if she had been waiting for me to say that.

“After all, you need to learn just what your power is! Of course, you have no choice in this matter!”

I’ve heard this several times already.

“Are powers really that dangerous?”

The saint put her finger on her chin, and made a thinking pose.

“Mm~ I wonder? I almost got eaten once, and my neck got snapped that one other time, so against ‘you people’, it’s pretty dangerous, I’d say.”

...You people?

“But rather than dangerous... I think the adjective ‘useful’ is more fitting. Just look at my love & peace! This room is only there for the exceptions!”

She made a disgusted face as she pointed at me again.

“You seem dangerous, so make sure you get locked up in a prison like this if you ever commit a crime. Ah, you said your power was called ‘Heart of Gold’, right? Seems quite terrifying.”

The saint let out an exaggerated gasp, and made a fearful face.

“Could it be... an ability to make people turn into gold just by looking at them?”

“Who knows. We’ll know when I use it.”

“Don’t you look down on my guesses! I always get one out of ten powers right, you know?”

“So you get nine wrong out of every ten guesses...”

“Eh, it’s good enough. Now, I’ll teach you how to use your power, so just you wait!”

The saint leapt over the sofa behind her, and ran away from me.

She stopped in front of the steel door.

She seemed to think that wasn't enough, and used her mana to create a shield around her.

“The way to use your power is simple! Just think of the name of your power for three seconds!”

It's that simple?

“There's no ceremony or anything like that...?”

“Nope!”

Was she for real?

I didn't fully trust her, but still followed her instructions.

[Gold Achieves All = Heart of Gold].

Ding.

A window that was about 32 inches big appeared in front of me.

I thought it was a function of the skill Oracle for a second, but once I saw that “Heart of Gold” was written at the top with a list below it, I was rendered speechless.

This... is my power...?

“Did you succeed?”

The saint asked me this from afar.

I thought about lying for a second, but gave up on it immediately.

“Well... I don’t know if this really counts as success, really...”

The saint found my answer to be quite peculiar, and walked towards me.

She sat down right next to me, and looked into the window with a guarded look.

“This is... internet shopping?”

After thinking a little bit, the saint took out party poppers from somewhere, and popped them in front of me.

“Congrats! Yay!”

“Thanks.”

I pinched the saint's cheeks with a smile.

“U, uugh, please shtahp..!”

My fingers caught fire.

My body, which was only moving due to the effects of black magic, was capable of being purified just by touching the saint.

“Dangerous? Terrifying? 10% chance of getting abilities right?”

“It's not my fault! It's not my fault! Eii!”

A little later.

I looked carefully at the saint sitting on the other side of me.

She took a sip of her tea, and smiled brightly.

“Don't be so disappointed. Perhaps it was a disguise to hide your true power? It's only possible to get a clear idea of what your ability is after reading its description anyway. The analysis must've been completed about now, so I suppose we can check it together?”

“Analysis?”

“Powers, skills, and items that have been recorded by the Oracle are analyzed by the skill for its users. New abilities take about five minutes to analyze, though.”

When I thought of the word “click”, a mouse pointer of sorts appeared.

Right, so this is how this works?

Click.

[Gold Achieves All = Heart of Gold] – An ability to buy anything with money.

– [Lv.1] Trade (Buy, sell)

There wasn’t enough information.

“I clicked it.”

“Hold on.”

The saint pressed something with her finger in the air.

Was it possible to share information with those you partied with?

YES.

The saint's eyes moved quickly, as if she was reading something.

“It seems to be a manifestation of money worship of sorts, but...
Hm, [Whitehead] and [Menticide]...”

It seemed that she was reading some other things as well.

I, too, was looking into the saint's abilities.

[Complete remembrance = Total Recall] – Perfect memory.

The descriptions were completely useless. Was it like photographic memory?

I imagine this would come at a cost as well.

“I've confirmed it! Your ability seems to be a shopping ability!”

That's it? After all that time of thinking?

“Oh, I see... is that what you thought I'd saaaayyy!”

“Puha!”

When I reached out to grab her cheeks again, the saint sprayed out the tea in her mouth out of surprise.

“Gah!”

Hiss!

My hands and face caught on blue fire, and pain ran across it.

“My eyes... my eyeesss..!”

“Ahh! Uhh... what do I do?!”

To think the tea in her mouth would turn into holy water...

After rolling on the floor in pain for a while, I stood up as if nothing had happened once the fire dissipated.

“Er...”

The saint carefully opened her mouth as she handed me a handkerchief.

“This...”

“I don’t need it.”

The saint hugged her chest with a shocked face.

“Could it be... you think it’s too precious...?”

“Precious? What’s precious?”

“Holy water that sprayed out of a young female student?”

“Shut the hell up.”

It seems that I am sort of a laughing stock for her.

“So? Results?”

“I don’t know how to put it, but...”

The saint looked away as she said this.

“Now that you’ve found out that your ability isn’t combat oriented, why not give up?”

This kid...

She was clearly holding back her laughter.

Her shoulders were shaking as she said this.

“It’s just at level one? I think it’d get better over time. Plus, it’s an alright power. If I were to look at it with a positive light...”

The saint’s hand that was currently over her mouth trembled.

Her face was beet red.

Well, it was understandable.

Humanity’s worst murderer, menticide, the heartless monster... has attained an internet shopping ability, after all.

“I think it’s pretty good.”

And I wasn’t lying.

It had almost an infinite number of uses, and it allows the user to lower the risk for his ventures as much as he wanted.

I just haven't leveled it up properly yet.

“Even so, it's just a shopping ability... Pft! Ahaha!”

In the end, the saint let loose.

And my patience ran out as well.

“Gyaah!”

Doesn't matter if my hands burn or not. I grabbed onto her cheek again.

I can't take it unless I begin stretching that mochi-like cheek of hers.

“Kya!”

“Don't laugh at other people's abilities!”

“It hurs! It hurrts! Ora! Shiniing-!”

That again?!

A little later.

I, who cleaned up the general mess in the room, looked into the eyes of the saint.

The lecture began.

“I’ve said this multiple times already, Mr. Murderer. You touch the skins of little girls too easily.”

“I’m sorry...”

“You need to be more mature. I almost invoked the power of a cop within me, you know?”

I, whose body was completely messed up due to the shining buster, bowed deeply.

“I have nothing to say...”

This is quite unfair, but let’s stay still for now.

“I think that, with this ability, it’ll be... quite hard to deal with the hero and his companions. Anyway, let’s start again, shall we? Appearance isn’t everything, after all.”

“Then...”



[Heart of Gold].

A shopping window appeared in front of me.

“Buy something, would you?”

“Alright.”

I found an e-cigarette using the search bar, and put it in my cart.

It cost \$250.

Alright. Checkout.

“I can’t buy anything?”

I stretched out my hand.

The saint looked down at it curiously.

“What is this?”

“I need cash.”

“To think you’d ask for money like a pimp... fine, I’ll lend you some, so just take it. 10% interest per day.”

High interest, huh.

The saint took out a gold coin out of a wallet shaped like a frog.

“Thank you for your donation.”

“I’m lending you!”

I ignored it.

Anyway, what should I...

I tried putting the gold coin on the shopping window.

Ka-ching!

The gold coin disappeared, and I had acquired \$1500.

“.....”

“Power” was something that was akin to a manifestation of all the experiences of my life.

Then this must mean that my ‘true self’ spent quite a time working on this sound effect...

Was he that bored?

When I pressed the checkout button again, I was told to type out an address.

“Address.”

“I don’t know.”

“You’re no help.”

“Kuh...!”

I put in “in front of customer” instead of the actual address.

It should come, right? ...Right?

It was hard for me to look into the eyes of the saint.

Time to press the confirm button.

Mm...

“Apparently it takes eight hours.”

“Eight hours? How useless!”

“.....”

The saint put away her teacups, and stood up.

“We’ll end it here. We can meet tomorrow at the same time. Useless Mr. Murderer.”

Looking at her tired face, it seemed that she was about to go to sleep.

“Ah, just a second. Would you please bring a dictionary tomorrow?”

“What? A dictionary?”

There is no better way to learn about a world than through a dictionary.

After all, a dictionary contains all the words in the world.

I could buy it using my power, but that’d be a waste of money.

“A dictionary of this world. The biggest one, if possible. Ah, I also

need a map and a history book.”

The saint had a question mark above her head.

No, it’s not a metaphor. There was an actual question mark above her head.

Probably done through the use of the Oracle.

“What are you going to use it for?”

“Studying.”

Just identifying the existence of these things is enough. I need to learn, research, and study in order to win.

After all, this aspect of life should be a concurrent in all worlds.

“...Hm. Alright. Anything else? No? Ok! I’ll be going, then?”

After talking to herself shortly, the saint yawned, and disappeared while waving her arms.

Chapter 10. Asking A Different Murderer

If a normal person was given a power just for transferring to a different world–.

What would happen if an abnormal person was sent to a different world?

Morto Hai was able to acquire information on “The world’s strongest” through the rumors that the people of the underworld had told her.

A murderer who collected the hearts of evil men as someone who achieved the nirvana of evil.

That person’s name was, Menticide.

He didn’t have a real name.

No one knew where he came from, or how he came to be.

But everyone who had touched upon the dark side of the world had said this.

If you really want the humanity’s strongest person, that man is who you are looking for.

Morto had shared such an information with Necro, and succeeded in summoning him after several times.

But the first impression of him she got fell short of her expectations.

Menticide wasn't a cold, cruel psychopath. He was an idiot who did whatever he wanted.

To think he'd read something like a dictionary at a time like this.

'Is he doing this out of a sense of pride? Now really isn't the time for that...'

There were two days until the beginning of the selection tournament.

Right now, Morto Hai was visiting another one of great evils in the underworld, one of the worst murderers in history, Kirisaki Hatsume.

The girl was trimming her fingernails in the second containment room. She felt a presence near her, but didn't do anything as she continued to trim her fingernail as she hummed to herself.

She had a beautiful hair done in a hime-cut.

The sailor uniform she had on accentuated her curves, and the

black stockings she had on furthered her beauty.

According to herself, she was a full-time student.

When Morto asked her a question, Kirisaki responded lazily without even bothering to turn around.

“The world’s strongest mudererrrr?”

“Yes. I was wondering if you knew about him.”

“Ha?”

Kirisaki widened her eyes slightly, and raised her arms.

“I don’t just know him. I’m a part of his church! What, you think this is funny? Are you looking down on me?”

Was he that famous? It seemed that the only ones unaware of his existence were the common folk.

“What is it, what is it? Have you become curious of ‘Lord Menticide’?”

Kirisaki’s eyes began to sparkle.

To think such an innocent-looking girl would be a murderer who

tracked down and killed high school girls...

She wouldn't have believed it if it wasn't for the fact that the girl tried to kill her the moment they met.

“Church member...?”

Kirisaki seemed to take offense in Morto asking the same question over and over, and narrowed her eyes.

“Because he's a god! Don't you know?”

“God?”

The title was too much for a mere murderer.

“Just what do you know? What a useless bitch.”

“Please don't call me that.”

One side calls her an idiot saint, and the other calls her a bitch.

Why do these people like giving nicknames so much?

“Hah? Well, fine. I suppose you might not know. Ahaha! Sorry, sorry.”

She said whatever she wanted.

Kirisaki went back to working on her fingernails. Of course, these weren't "her" fingernails per se, but rather those of her victims.

Tekko kagi (手甲鉤).

The ninja gloves that protected her hand was covered with fingernails.

Each fingernails that were decorated with manicure made the glove look as if it was covered in scales.

These fingernails were her 'trophies'.

"Ms. Kirisaki."

Morto carefully opened her mouth to ask a question.

"Do you know why Menticide is dubbed the title of 'The World's Strongest?'"

An information that normal people couldn't get their hands on. Morto was hoping that Kirisaki, who was a murderer like

Menticide, would know of this information.

Kirisaki didn't let her eyes off of her tekko kagi as she spoke.

“‘Lord’ Menticide. Don't forget the lord part. Anyway, why do you ask? Aha! I get it. You're thinking of summoning him, right? You should give up. You'll regret it, you know?”

She was speaking casually, but Morto didn't let that slip by her.

The girl in front of her was someone who killed sixty three students and eight armed officers. Having someone like that say ‘don't do it’ definitely wasn't normal.

“We're doing research before we actually summon him. The decision hasn't actually been made yet.”

It was a lie, of course.

“Heeh.”

Kirisaki stopped what she was doing, and glared at Morto with snake-like eyes.

“If you don't want your entire nation to disappear, you should give up immediately.”

Morto had never heard such a cold and serious voice like this come out of Kirisaki before.

“He isn’t someone you guys can control. He’s not ‘human’. He’s more akin to a monster from mythologies.”

Someone that even a murderer would refer to as a monster...

Of course, she gave him a few points for being able to destroy her heart in one shot, but there were plenty in this world who could do this already.

And if she had been protecting herself with mana in the first place, he wouldn’t have even been able to do that.

“Is that all? He must be pretty good at shooting. Or maybe he’s pretty good with a knife?”

“Kyahahaha!”

Kirisaki let out an uncontrollable laughter.

“How funny! What are you talking about? Are you mad? You think he’d be the strongest just because he’s good with a gun or a knife? Seriously, are you alright in the head?”

“...Isn’t he called the strongest because he’s strong?”

“No, well, he is strong, but don’t you think you need to have some big achievement under your belt for a title like that? When people judge someone, they look at a person’s past deeds, don’t they?”

Surprisingly, she said something quite logical for once.

“So just what did he do...?”

Kirisaki rested her chin on her hands, and smiled.

“Do you want to know what much? I can’t tell you that for free.”

“...What do you want?”

“Finger.”

The answer was immediate.

“Not fingernail?”

“Aha~ you’re looking down me too much.”

Kirisaki looked at Morto with mocking eyes.

“Hey, bitch, don’t try to fool me. I already know that you don’t even flinch when it comes to fingernails.”

It was a pretty high price for some information. But if Morto tried to barter, she'd be refused immediately.

That was what Kirisaki was like, after all.

“...I understand. But not now. After the selection battle, I'll give it to you then.”

Kirisaki grinned.

“As I thought. You give a finger to people as if it's nothing to you. If it was me, I would've asked how many I needed?”

Morto didn't understand Kirisaki's words. Obviously, the amount of fingers would be...

“Ten, no?”

“As I thought... you're broken, little bitch. How sad, kyahahahaha! How funny!”

This person didn't know anything. She didn't know anything, but acted like she knew everything.

That annoyed Morto.

“Fine, I’ll tell you.”

Kirisaki straightened up.

“Menticide. Humanity’s worst killer. Heartless monster. Unknown name. Unknown age. Unknown gender. Unknown nationality. No one’s sure if he’s even human. All attempts to track him down through DNA had failed. The official record for his victims are 96,732 people. This is only because they failed to find corpses for the other victims, though. The actual record would be 129,683 people. Amazing, right? He managed to kill that many just by himself.”

“Hundred twenty thousand...?”

She would’ve thought that this was a lie just five years ago.

But this wasn’t the case this time. This number wasn’t much in a world like this.

It was a lot of people, sure, but Morto had seen more people die in the front lines.

It was common for a wizard to kill tens of thousands at a time.

“So he’s the strongest because he killed a lot of people?”

Kirisaki shrugged.

“Ei~ that can’t be it, right? Nowadays, murderers are graded based not on numbers, but on quality. You can’t even brag with numbers anymore.”

Bragging? With killing people?

Just what was in the heads of these idiots? Do they not understand how hard it was to save a life? Did they not understand the value of a human’s life?

“Well, the reason is simple. Lord Menticide simply did things that no one believed was possible.”

Because he did things that was not humanly possible, he was the strongest.

At least, that’s how the logic went.

“Think about it. Is it possible to destroy an entire drug cartel by yourself? Without any help?”

The enemy was a giant gang association armed with heavy weaponry.

Just touching a minion from this gang would get one’s family killed off.

If they take hostage of someone, no one would be able to do anything.

“Right... If you don’t have the confidence of being able to protect those around yourself, then...”

Everyone has connections. Especially those who pursue justice.

It’s impossible to destroy evil whilst protecting everyone in the world. No matter how much one tries to hide oneself, strands of hair or drops of blood would always be left at the scene.

Evil would always manage to take advantage of that.

“That’s right. But Lord Menticide did it. He destroyed forty eight gangs just by himself.”

“How...?”

“It’s simple. He didn’t think about the hostages at all. The connections he had in the first place was minimal, but... one time, a mafia group took a preschool hostage and threatened Lord Menticide. They told him that the children would die if Menticide didn’t give in. Do you know what happened?”

“Could it be...”

“Yup, that’s exactly what happened. He sliced off the neck of the

mafia boss as each and every one of the children got executed.”

He doesn't care for hostages. He's a hero who destroys evil organizations, but he has no regard for the lives of innocents.

His actions were contradicting.

“Can you believe it? He isn't human. He's a 'demon god'.”

Morto tried not to show any facial changes.

“He was already the strongest before he came into this world! If someone like that comes into this world, if he manages to learn this 'magic' of yours, something very very scary would happen? I can bet you on it!”

Morto, at this time, thought 'oh no' on one side, while at the same time thinking 'it doesn't really matter, does it?'

After all, magic wasn't something anyone could do.

“I'll report what you said to the prime minister. But according to what I heard, he turned himself to the police...?”

“Correct.”

“The reason being...?”

“Something about life not being fun~?”

It felt like there was a deeper story to all this, but the talk did not continue.

“Boring. Let’s stop here.”

Kirisaki smiled enchantingly, and lifted one of her arms.

Kii-, kiriririri!

Her index finger turned silver, and began to lengthen. It became thinner, and turned into a blade.

“Now, my turn to ask questions.”

Kirisaki pointed her bladed finger at Morto’s white neck.

“The person who was summoned this time. Who is it?”

“I can’t say.”

It seemed that she had no idea that the person summoned might’ve been Menticide.

“Is that so?”

The finger moved sideways, and created a tiny red line on Morto's neck.

That line immediately disappeared thanks to Morto's regeneration ability, though.

“I'll get to know it later anyway, so you might as well tell me now? After all, you told everyone about my power already.”

“That's something you asked me to do, though? You told me to just leak 'that' info.”

Kirisaki moved her finger away after listening to Morto's unafraid voice.

“This is why people with a firm belief are so scary. They aren't afraid even when you put a blade to their neck. Now, leave. You're done here, aren't you? You know everything you need to know now anyway.”

“Thank you for sharing your time with me.”

The person in front of Morto was essentially a criminal. Even so, Morto acted courteously to her.

The young murderer watched the saint exit the room, and smiled

bitterly.

She complained to herself that... If god really did exist, it would be better for him to show some mercy to people.

Chapter 11. Battle Royale

The next day, at 6:10AM.

Approximately eight hours after Heart of Gold was first used.

It was about time for the delivery to take place.

I took my eyes off of the clock, and turned to the saint.

She was looking at me with sparkling eyes.

Tick, tick, tick.

The clock's second hand pointed at minute 11, and a small paper box appeared on the table.

Without any warning.

“...So that's how it works.”

I couldn't even hear it being placed on the table.

How should I take this?

Was there a path of sorts that connected to here from the shelter?

No, that wasn't possible.

The door was closed, too, which meant that no one entered the room other than me and the saint.

In other words, delivery will not fail wherever you may be...

“How peculiar.”

Necro observed the package from several different directions.

“I've seen my fair share of powers in the past, but nothing as strange as this. Try opening it, would you?”

This isn't actually like an internet shopping power, is it?

I opened the package under the gazes of everyone in the room.

For now...

“Discount coupons...”

It was just like my former world, no matter how you looked at it.

“The attention to detail is quite something!”

I ignored Necro’s comment, and removed the bubble wrap inside.

A rectangular box...

It was a container of my favorite e-cigarette.

Nothing special about it so far.

“Ah~ what a disappointment.”

Necro threw down the coupon in his hands down on the floor.

“It’s a total failure, isn’t it? I had expected something much more from the world’s strongest... To think it’d be trash like this... Ah! I’m not trying to offend you or anything? You know exactly what I’m trying to get at, right?”

Trash...

“Ah! It’s already six? I need to get on my morning jog. I’ll be going, then. See you in four days!”

Necro went out as if he had an important meeting he had to be in.

“Tsk, what a waste of time.”

He even said this as he left.

I turned to the saint.

She had been silent all this time. Even now, she was looking down at the empty paper box.

She must be very disappointed.

“How... normal. I didn’t expect anything like this.”

After a long period of silence, she opened her mouth.

“With an ability like this... it’s impossible to...”

Right. That would be the conclusion an average person would come to.

But.

“Don’t give up so soon. You can’t give up just like that.”

“An optimist, are you? But optimism can’t help you cross the wall of reality, you know?”

She wasn't wrong.

"It's ok. It'd be good for this game to have a certain level of difficulty to it."

"If you fail at the selection battle that is to take place in three days, you wouldn't even get a chance to take part in that game of yours. Do you have a plan in place?"

Selection battle?

"I haven't heard of such a thing yet?"

The saint tilted her head in curiosity.

"Necro didn't say anything?"

"Nothing."

So he didn't say.

He must've thought that it wasn't important.

The saint bowed apologetically towards me.

“There must’ve been a mistake. I apologize.”

“It’s ok. He must’ve been busy cleaning up everything I did. In any case, my enemies?”

“People similar to you. All people who made a name for themselves in the underworld.”

So they were all murderers.

“Powers?”

“Secret. The battle needs to be fair.”

“Ha——”

I could only laugh.

“Fair? Wasn’t I the last person to be summoned? And do you actually think people would come out alive after the battle? It’s most certain to be a bloody carnage.”

The saint raised her index finger when she heard the word carnage.

“Idiot saint, you’ve already pushed several people into almost certain death. It’s already too late for you to try to act like a nice

person.”

The saint looked down at the floor.

After a period of silence, she raised her head as if she had decided something.

Her eyes were filled with confidence.

A maddening amount of it.

“Yes. Like you said, Mr. Murderer, perhaps it’s already too late.”

Her voice seemed to echo in the room.

“But rules are rules. Please try your hardest to win the battle in four days.”

She said this, and stood up from her spot.

So I can’t get any more information on the others...

I went over the actions that I needed to take in the future.

Unexpectedly enough, the answer to my predicament was closer to me than I thought.

Floating eye.

This eye was something that wasn't restricted by physical barriers.

In other words, it was possible for me to 'peek into other containment rooms.'

Four days...

I spent all this time doing my best into observing my enemies.

And on the day of the battle.

The saint came to visit for the first time in four days.

"How is it? If you say you'd give up, I'll take you out of the battle."

Why was she offering me this?

Did she change her mind after I told her that this would be a bloody carnage?

"Not interested in giving up."

“Please think this through. You’ll be locked up till the hero dies, but this would be much better than dying twice over?”

“Dying twice must mean that it’s possible for me to be revived twice as well.”

I faked a kind smile.

“It’s ok. I decided to do this. You have no fault in this at all.”

I didn’t say it to try to make her feel better.

This was to raise friendship in order to increase my profits in the future.

“Is that so?”

The saint’s voice brightened, as if she was being saved by someone.

Did the guilt that weighed her shoulders down disappear?

How simple.

This idiot is fated to be used for the rest of her life.

She’d willingly crucify herself on the cross of good deeds.

“Of course. Adults need to take responsibility for their choices, after all. You already gave me a chance as well. That’s good enough. I’ll have to suffer from the consequences of my actions by myself. Just like powers.”

The use of my power required cash.

This must be similar for other powers as well.

There was no way a power would come without any risks or payment to it.

Love & Peace and Overdeath must be similar in this matter as well.

Or it might have a certain risk to it.

The saint thought to herself for a second, and nodded after some thought.

“I understand. If that’s what you think, I won’t try to make you give up any further.”

The saint walked right in front of me, and motioned me to sit down.

“Can you kneel for a second?”

“...Why?”

“I need to do something before I leave.”

“What?”

“You’ll see.”

This is worrying...

“Like this?”

The moment I kneeled, I felt as if my forehead was being pressed by hot iron.

“Ah...!”

As I wondered if she was putting a seal of sorts on me, the saint laughed to herself with her lips covered.

“Could it be...”

I used the floating eye in order to look at myself.

There was a seal burnt into the place where the saint kissed me.

And that place was currently set on holy fire.

“Ugh...!”

I rolled on the ground for a moment due to the pain in my head.

It felt like my brain was being burnt to a crisp.

When I came to, the saint was looking at me with a frightened look on her face.

My arms were sealed by a straightjacket.

“I’m sorry! I put a seal on you so that you wouldn’t be able to escape, but to think you’d be in this much pain...”

To think she’d put a straightjacket on me as well, even after putting a seal on me...

“...What magic is it?”

“If you get away from me, your head will... hurt a little bit? Nyahaha?”

The saint said this as she looked away.

I could tell immediately what magic she put on me from this.

So this would make my head explode if I run away.

“Now, let’s get going, shall we?”

The saint walked over to the exit with confident steps, as if she had forgotten everything that had just happened.

Of course, she left me, whose arms were tied, to crawl over like a caterpillar.

The place that the saint took me to was an arena that gave off a feel of an opera house.

The paint on the arena’s old walls had paint falling off in many places, and it was scarred with many blade marks as well.

I changed my viewpoint and took a look at the entire arena.

I could see my opponents stretching behind caged doors.

To the West, there was the [Man-eating Lion], Bruno Balter.

To the North, there was the [Nail Hunter], Kirisaki Hatsume.

To the East, [Slenderman] Benny Guts.

The center of the arena was decorated with walls and doors to make it resemble something close to a survival training room.

To the top right, I could see nobles wearing masks roaming the area looking down into the arena.

So this is a form of entertainment for them...

By taking a look at their physique and the placement of their scars and dots, I could tell that they were mostly people who were there at the prime minister's room.

“You’re late?”

Necro approached me with a friendly smile.

He had a bowtie and a tailcoat on.

Well, he did have quite a high position in the government, after all.

“What took you so long?”

The saint responded half-assedly to Necro's question.

“Nothing.”

“Nothing my ass. You woke up late, didn’t you?”

They treat each other like friends, despite the age difference. Did they know each other from the beginning?

“Ah, right, I need to get things started quick.”

Necro slapped me on the back.

“How you feeling? Feeling good? Don’t run again, alright? This time, you’re pitted against fellow murderers. Feels good, right? Time to prove yourself! Yeah!”

“.....”

I swung my bound arms up and down in response.

“Oh dear, so your arms are tied up. Should I untie you?”

The grin disappeared from Necro’s face immediately.

“But I don’t feel like taking it off. I wonder why?”

“.....”

“I thought for a bit, and I feel like fighting without your arms would be more impactful. After all, you’re the world’s strongest, aren’t you? Fighting without any penalties just won’t do.”

“So you’re telling me to fight like this?”

Well, that’s fine with me, I guess.

“I won’t ever tie you again if you win this. Please don’t let down our expectations, alright?”

“.....”

Seeing how the saint pretty much ignored our interaction, it seemed that she knew that this was going to happen already.

“Just do it. Why? You think I’m being too hard on you? Is that it? No. This is all just karma. Do you know how much trouble I was in because of you last time? Do you?!”

Necro pointed at the people up top.

“If you don’t give them a strong impression right from the get-go, everything’s over. Why? Because you killed the colonel! Do you even know who he was?”

Looks like he wasn’t going to let that pass, huh.

“If you don’t give them the impression that you can kill the hero on this spot, we’re all dead. You get that?”

I understood the situation we were in now.

“I can hear you even if you don’t yell. I’ll get you what you want, so just watch.”

I had no arms, but the result of the battle was already set.

I checked my opponents with the floating eye once more, and moved towards the exit door.

“Oh, so you’re that confident, huh? Now then, I suppose we’ll get going now. We’ll see each other after you finish. Good luck.”

The saint seemed to be extremely disturbed by the entire exchange.

She must not be registering anything because of everything that was to happen just a little later.

“Ah, right. I forgot to mention.”

Necro seemed to remember something, and turned around before he got out of the waiting room.

“It’s not like you’ll die again because you’re already a corpse, but if your heart or head gets destroyed, I’ll cancel the magic I put on you. But don’t resent me for that or anything. I gotta make things fair for the others.”

I just nodded.

A little later, the steel door behind me shut down, and locked itself.

The door began to shine with mana.

It should be impossible to escape this place without an extremely strong power.

Seriously—

I’ve had a hard time restraining myself.

At that moment.

Everyone in the arena shared the same emotions.

Pressure.

Fear.

Despair.

A freezing chill enveloped their bodies, and made them tremble uncontrollably.

Sounds of teeth clacking against each other could be heard all over the place.

Clang!

A glass of wine in someone's hand slipped off, and shattered against the floor.

“Hah... Hah...!”

The air was so heavy, that people began to have a hard time breathing.

The people of the arena fell into a state of despair due to this unfamiliar experience.

But it was impossible to run.

Their legs were completely void of strength. It was hard for them to even stand.

Even people from far away could feel the effects of this. They felt faint, and began to see their vision crumble.

It was a difference in power that could be felt from even hundreds of meters away.

The one person who responded to this the strongest was the high school murderer– [Nail Hunter] Kirisaki Hatsume.

“What in the world did you bastards summon?! Just what did you summon?!”

Kirisaki ripped apart the hair on her head viciously, and jumped out of her room as soon as the gates opened.

Her arms and legs that have become akin to knives were letting off sparks everywhere due to her maniacal actions.

It wasn't much different for the other murderers.

[Slenderman] Benny Guts, who had been crawling like a spider in his room, hid himself in the bushes as soon as he could escape.

On the other hand, the [Man-eating Lion], Bruno Balter, felt a 'dangerous smell' to the south of him.

The smell of corpses and gunpowder.

“This one’s the real deal.”

Caucasoid.

Bruno’s white skin, along with his large nose and grey eyes made him resemble a predator.

His messy brown hair made him look quite a lot like a lion as well.

“Guhahaha!”

Bruno let out a maddened laughter, and extended his arms to his side.

His muscles expanded greatly, and threatened to tear themselves out of his clothing.

He couldn’t see his enemy due to the walls in the arena, but Bruno could instinctively feel that his enemy was on the ‘same level’ as him.

“The hunt begins!”

The decision was made quite quickly.

Bruno's first course of action would be to charge at the enemy!

No need for complicated strategies.

No beast could stand up to the power of a lion.

Although Bruno was no match for the man, he had to fight the man before anyone else.

It was impossible for him to share his prey with others.

That was because his power was focused around monopoly.

[Victors eat all = Sweet Tooth] – By eating the defeated, it is possible to take in everything they possess as yours.

– [Lv.1] Attains the health and strength of others.

– [Lv.2] Attains the knowledge and mana of others.

– [Lv.3] Attains the skill and abilities of others.

With this skill, it would take no time at all for Bruno to stand at the top of the food chain.

The Man-eating Lion charged with full speed towards his prey.

Chapter 12. Mammonism

So he was hiding there.

Bruno revealed his violent nature towards the enemy that was hidden behind the wooden pillar.

“Guhaaaaaa!”

An attack strong enough to instantly break a cow’s neckbone smashed the enemy’s head.

The enemy must’ve thought that he hid himself well, but.

It was impossible to escape Bruno, a being who had an extremely developed nose.

Bang! Crack!

The pillar crashed and a cloud of dust rose up into the air.

The enemy was helplessly smashed by the power of Bruno’s attack.

“...Tch!”

Bruno clicked his tongue and stopped walking.

He had realized that what he had hit was, in fact, a mannequin dressed in casual clothing.

Jin, who had been watching from afar, smiled.

This was one of the many ways that his power could be used.

The method was quite simple.

1. Imbue his smell on to clothes and put it on a mannequin.
2. Put an extremely high price on the mannequin and put it on the market.
3. When needed, cancel the sales order on the market.

Because the object hadn't been sold due to its price, it would reappear where it previously existed.

Jin was testing out this feature in live combat right now.

Well, if he was just testing this one thing, Bruno would've already died by now due to the blunder.

Bruno realized that he had been tricked and began to shout in

anger.

“I have become stronger! Much stronger! Much, much stronger!!!”

He was a natural born predator.

He didn't have to work hard to make others submit. Others submitted themselves in front of him and he just needed to search for women and alcohol.

He was a king that was recognized by the heavens itself.

But to think that his enemy would treat him like a fool.

The fact that he was weak enough to be tricked by something as simple as this made Bruno angry enough to explode.

“Where are you?! Where are you hiding?! Damn coward!!”

Bruno destroyed everything in front of him as he chased the ‘scent’.

It was hard to get rid of one's habits, even if he had learned that it wasn't a good one.

Because of that, Bruno almost fell into Jin's second trap, but...

“Guha!”

Bruno wasn't an idiot.

He knew that he was being led by his nose, so he learned to counter it.

Bruno found the real one 'who had a status screen', and opened his mouth.

His artificial jaw opened up and grew big enough to fit a human head inside it.

Rows of teeth from Bruno's victims revealed themselves on the roof of his mouth.

The teeth were able to crush just about anything that came into contact with it.

This was the physical capability that Bruno had attained by coming into this world.

‘This is the end!’

But right before he could swallow Jin's head—.

“Big...?”

Something peculiar happened.

His trademark brown hair ruffled in the wind.

His head that had been ripped off was flying in the empty space around him.

Bang.

The head fell on the ground and slowly came to a rolling stop.

Bruno looked up at his headless body in stupefaction.

‘Attacked? How...?’

Chuaaaa.

His neck began to spray out an immense amount of blood.

It stood still for quite a while until it dropped down unto its knees.

The impact caused Bruno’s head to begin rolling again.

‘My breath...!’

He was desperately clinging to his life using the life force he had taken from his victims, but even that was running out now.

Roll... clack.

The rolling head stopped moving again.

Bruno, while feeling a little sick from all the rolling, couldn't help but notice something stuck on the wall.

‘A canine tooth...?’

The tooth wasn't his.

It wasn't one of his victims', either.

After all, the ones he collected were all molars.

He could only think of a single possibility.

‘He broke his own canine with his tongue and spat it out like a blowdart? Such an idiotic...!’

He tried to shout out that it was all just nonsense, but no sound was coming from his mouth.

“I... a king... at a place like this...!”

His eyes lost vitality.

Eventually, a dark curtain was cast over his vision. The short life of the man-eating lion had come to an end.

“First, one.”

Taking care of powers that could grow endlessly was top-priority.

Even if it wasn't me, the man would've been taken care of by the others anyway.

Competitions between strong individuals happened in any society, at any time, after all.

Extreme amounts of luck is needed for an ability like this to thrive.

I suppose it can be summarized by saying that he didn't have “plot armor”.

I began to dig through the body of my unfortunate victim.

The two jewelry items that I found were respectively priced at 6,000 dollars and 5,000 dollars each.

I immediately sold it in the market.

Kaching, kaching.

The sound effect of money piling up rang in my head.

[Current funds: 11,500 dollars]

Barababa♪

The amount of cash in my wallet slowly came to a stop and a little chiptune played in my head.

An extra message popped up at the bottom.

What's this?

I don't have many expectations... but let's check it out, shall we?

[Gold Achieves All = Heart of Gold]

- An ability to buy anything with money.
- [Lv.1] Trade (Buy, Sell)
- [Lv.2] Purchase (Luck, Talent, Appearance, Charm, Health, Skill, Knowledge, Information, Ability, Life)

“.....”

I lost the ability to speak.

Truly, gold achieved all.

To think I could buy something like this...

“Hah...”

I now understood.

If level 1 dealt with material goods,

Level 2 dealt with conceptual goods.

I was taking a look at my new ability as I walked.

[Luck]

- Your luck stat is currently 1.
- You can pull one joker card out of one hundred tries.
- You need ten million dollars to increase this stat by one.

Ten million...?

So if I have a billion dollars, I'd get a chance to pull out a joker card for one hundred percent of my tries?

Pretty much a cheat, isn't it.

After all, it would be possible to recover all money lost in a casino.

In any case, I suppose it would be wise to keep myself away from this for now.

It'd be better if I increased it after getting the money for it.

Next...

[Talent]

– If unbeatable talent is a stat of 100, it requires one million dollars to increase the stat by one.

[▷ Sword Talent]

[Art Talent]

[Acting Talent]

...

The list seemed to have no end.

I'll take a look at it later in the future, I guess.

As for [Looks] and [Charm]...

Hold on.

It's possible to increase my height?

Maybe it's possible to grow hair as well?

What can't you do with money?

I clicked the category next to those two as I was marveling at the usefulness of cash.

[Health]

– The stats that you purchase with money is no different from the stats you gain through training.

[▷ Health: 10,000 dollars]

[Mana: 20,000 dollars] [!]

[Attack: 100,000 dollars]

[Incantation: 200,000 dollars]

[HP Regen: 1,000,000 dollars]

[MP Regen: 2,000,000 dollars]

[Defense: 1,000,000 dollars]

[Magic Resistance: 2,000,000 dollars]

I can buy stuff like this, too?

I tried clicking on the stat that had the exclamation mark next to it.

[Mana]

– You cannot collect mana.

Oh dear.

So I can't buy mana?

What about the others...

[Attack]

– Force is mass times acceleration. If you increase your attack, you will be able to accelerate faster. There is no need to increase agility if you increase this stat.

There was no need to get something like this.

My attack was 52 right now. Adding one onto it wouldn't change much.

I clicked the next category.

[Skill]

– Starting from pen spinning to tap dancing, any skill you might desire is listed here.

[▷ Vocal Mimicry: 500 dollars]

[Pickpocketing: 1000 dollars]

[Lockpicking: 1200 dollars]

[Trap Disarming: 3000 dollars]

...

I guess I can look at this later as well.

What's [Information]?

Is it different from [Knowledge]?

[Information]

– A trained professional will be hired to find the information you want. Please type your request in the box below.

A search engine...

No, a detective agency, huh.

There were two categories left.

[Ability] and [Life].

[Ability]

– Supernatural abilities, incantations, magic, martial arts, it is possible to buy any ability in the multiverse.

[▷ Disturbing Blessing: 35,000,000 dollars]

[Heavenly Demon Technique: 50,000,000 dollars]

[Red Lotus Power: 11,000,000 dollars]

[A Thousand Thunderbirds: 83,000,000 dollars]

[Phase Shift: 12,000,000,000,000 dollars]

...

There's no end to it.

No matter how much I scrolled, the list just didn't end.

This place probably has more than a million abilities.

Maybe even more than a trillion.

I took my hand off the scrollbar and listed the abilities by their price, from low to high.

[▷ Boiling Blood: 10,000 dollars]

[Endless Swamp: 30,000 dollars]

[Poison Transmission: 50,000 dollars]

...

The cheapest one was ten thousand dollars...

Boiling Blood.

That was the only thing I could buy at the moment.

Should I collect more money, or should I just buy it?

“...Mm.”

I suppose I should just try buying it.

I need to figure out what it does.

I tried clicking [Boiling Blood].

[Boiling Blood]

– Rank: F-

– An ability that increases physical capabilities by rapidly heating up blood. Spends ten percent of your current health.

Pretty good.

I think I can synergize it with a different ability as well.

<You've selected [Boiling Blood]. Will you purchase it? Y/N>

Of course it's a yes.

Diding♪

I had 1500 dollars left now.

Huaaa.

My body became enveloped in light.

I had knowledge about how to use [Boiling Blood] now.

As I thought.

So this is how it worked.

There didn't seem to be a lot of risks other than the fact that I lose a bit of health.

I tried taking a look at the [Life] category.

'Buying and selling' life...

[Life]

- Coin continue. It is possible for you to have extra lives, just like a retro game character. Even if you die, you can respawn right where you died!

- Lives left: <3

- Price: 10,000,000,000,000 dollars.

10 trillion...?

Human lives were that expensive?

It's amazing, but...

After thinking a bit, I ended up laughing to myself.

I didn't even have the money. Is there any point in thinking about it?

I guess I'll just focus on my current task.

"Hah-"

Now, it's time to hunt the Nail Hunter.

I was tracking her location with the floating eye.

I turned eastward and took a look at the Nail Hunter.

She was currently residing inside Slenderman's starting place with a pale face, inside the steel door.

She's like a spider, huh.

She stuck herself on the inner walls using her bladed nails.

I suppose she was planning to cut off my head if I came in to investigate.

Slenderman was hidden in the swamps, observing the situation.

I suppose he was planning to attack as I fought the Nail Hunter.

So the only person who knows how to use her head is the Nail Hunter, huh.

She knew the importance of information and stayed calm even under extreme stress.

As soon as she understood that she couldn't win, she moved towards Slenderman's location.

Of course, they weren't allying with each other or anything.

After all, they had never talked to each other before.

After observing Slenderman for four days, I came to the conclusion that he was pretty much mute.

But since he knew that 'it was disadvantageous to fight first', he would try to avoid fighting.

He'd conserve as much strength as possible until it ended up becoming a 1v1.

Nail Hunter knew this as well, hence the reason why she moved east.

But results aren't everything.

They might've thought that they had hidden themselves well, but with my floating eye, they might as well have been in the palm of my hand.

I activated Heart of Gold in front of the entrance of Nail Hunter's hiding spot.

I had prepared something in case this happened.

I had wrapped a piece of styrofoam with a t-shirt and drenched it with lighter fluid.

I took out a lighter as well and lit it on fire.

Now that it's on fire... shoot!

The ball of flames let out a plume of smoke as it entered the other side of the door.

A few moments later, Nail Hunter shot out of the door with a few coughs.

If I could use my hands, it would've ended here, but...

Nail Hunter glared at me viciously.

But that glare soon turned into a look of confusion and happiness.

“Lord Menticide?”

Her voice was mixed with happiness and surprise.

“Really?!”

Slenderman still wasn't moving.

“Oh my god! It's for real!! U-um, nice to meet you! I'm Kirisaki Hatsume (霧崎初芽)!”

I knew her.

High school murderer, Kirisaki Hatsume.

She was famous for targeting high school girls and taking their fingernails.

That's why she was called the Nail Hunter.

She probably knew a lot about me as well.

“Your name is Jin? I’m a Jin (じん) as well! You won’t go easy on me, right? Right? Kyahaha! So funny! What am I saying?!”

Jin, as in human (人)?

Or Jin (刃) as in the one in her name, Hatsume (切割刃爪)?

She acted friendly around me as she used her bladed foot to aim for my neck.

A commendable effort. It was a sneaky attack that made use of her long reach.

I leaned sideways and dodged the attack.

Since the sword on her foot could change its angle as it moved, I leaned a little more than usual.

If I tried to just barely dodge it because she was weak, I’d get my neck cut off.

I only knew this because I invested time in analyzing her.

Shua!

Her five bladed fingers came at me even before her foot landed.

The back of her hand was covered to the brim with fingernails.

–It’s coming.

The nails on her glove instantly turned into fifty blades.

Chuachuachua!

A steel flower of death!

The nails that turned into various types of blades all bunched up together and came at me.

If I had thought that her ability was to turn her body into blades, I would’ve gotten the impression that only her body parts could be weaponized.

But since I already knew about her ability, I could easily dodge her attacks.

Kigigigi! Kii!

The attack was blocked by a shield that I had created.

“...Hah? What the hell is this?”

There was confusion on her face.

Of course.

Her best attempt to kill me was just foiled by a piece of furniture.

A broken refrigerator that I bought for a hundred dollars.

The Nail Hunter's shoulders lost all strength.

“So funny.”

That was it.

[Boiling Blood] activate.

I spun my body.

I put my left foot down on the concrete below me, which broke under the impact, and the left foot that hit the refrigerator caused the fridge to crumple.

The blades stuck to the refrigerator broke into pieces from the impact.

Soon after, the 150 kg fridge struck the Nail Hunter at an inhuman speed.

A loud boom sounded throughout the complex.

“Kyaa!”

“Waah!”

The audience screamed from the shock that shook the building.

So this was the ability’s power...?

Crack. Craack.

Pieces of stone fell off the destroyed walls.

As the dust settled, the remnants of my attack showed itself.

Drip... drip.

Blood was flowing below the fridge.

Her upper body had been crushed like a tomato, only her legs seemed to be intact at this point.

I would’ve taken care of it in a much cleaner fashion if I could use my hands...

I turned around, feeling a little regretful at my inability.

Chapter 13. The Strongest Class In The World

Crack. Craack.

The cracks around the refrigerator made it seem like the wall was about to fall apart at any moment.

Below the refrigerator were the pale legs of the dead murderer, and below that was a pool of blood.

‘Something like that’s... possible with the body of a corpse?’

Necro felt the hair on his arms stand up.

“God damn, that’s terrifying! I knew his innate ability was different from the others, but...”

It was hard to believe.

Corpses that have been revived using necromancy had the advantage of not dying easily, but they only retained up to ten percent of their former strength.

Normally, a revived corpse would only be able to waddle around like an invalid.

The power that Jin had just exhibited was something that Necro couldn't do even when he strengthened his body.

“How interesting. How'd he manage to do that? I didn't even give him a buff. Ah, did Morto do it? No... I'm not seeing anything on him. Damn...”

The limits of the human body are clear.

No matter however much one trains, a person would never be able to beat an elephant in a competition of strength.

It would be impossible to beat a cheetah in a race as well.

And no matter how one looked at it, kicking a refrigerator like that and lodging it into the wall was something that no animal could do.

Would a charging rhino be able to achieve such a feat?

‘Of course it can't. It's not like it can use mana in the first place...’

Necro gripped onto the handrails as he looked down at the stage.

The last enemy Jin had to fight was the slenderman, Benny Guts.

People knew him to be a man who butchered children in his previous world, but that was only half of the story.

Benny was a fictional beast just like Necro's knife, Gebesh.

In other words, he was a real monster.

Blub. Blurp.

Bubbles began appearing on the surface of the black swamp.

Benny slowly rose out of the black mud.

It almost looked like something was pulling him out, rather than him climbing out himself.

What was attached to his abnormally thin body were branch-like limbs.

He had been inside the swamp for a long time, but his black suit wasn't stained at all.

He was a masked gentleman with slicked-back hair, who had no ears or mouth.

A red substance akin to a burn mark twitched under his mask.

The distance between Jin and Benny was seven meters.

A strange light appeared out of Benny's shoulders to form a shape of some sort.

They were branch-like hands. But they didn't have any color or physical form.

Shf.

The transparent arms silently crept towards Jin.

[Invisible hand = All Grip] – An ability to grip onto whatever the user desires. The number of arms one can use multiplies the more one gains levels. It is possible to latch onto ideas and abilities later on.

– [Lv.1] It is possible to grip onto objects that are far away.
Max: 2.

– [Lv.2] It is possible to grip onto objects that are far away.
Max: 2.

– [Lv.3] It is possible to grip onto objects that are far away.
Max: 4.

Necro had personally seen the strength of this power.

The saint who carelessly approached Benny had gotten her neck completely crushed as a result..

Well, she recovered in an instant, though.

But if Jin were to caught in that hand, even he-.

‘Did he notice?’

Jin dodged [All Grip] just by tweaking his head a little to the side.

And he dodged the following attacks just as easily.

It all happened in just a few moments.

Slenderman, once finished attacking, didn't hesitate in making his next move.

He turned to the right.

He leapt onto the tree branches nearby and used it to gain the high ground.

He quickly approached the top of the wall.

‘Escape?! Oh dear...!!’

Benny gripped onto the rails with All Grip.

He lifted his body up unto the audience and at the same time threw two concealed knives towards Jin.

Now, he had one hand left.

The closest person to him at this point was Morto.

His hand quickly moved to use her as a hostage.

But-

Stab!

Black blood spewed out of Benny’s chest.

The invisible hand that was extending towards the saint disappeared mid-air.

There was no scream or emotion expressed.

Benny simply waves his limbs, trying to take out one of Kirisaki’s

broken blades out of his spine.

All of this took one second.

Jin stomped on the ground.

Kirisaki's broken blades all floated up in the air from the recoil of the stomp.

What immediately followed was something akin to a dance.

Some were hit by the tip of Jin's shoe and others by a roundhouse kick.

Jin continuously sent out a stream of blades towards Benny.

Stab stab stab!

The bullet-like blades stabbed into Benny's head, neck, and heart.

His struggling body lost all strength.

The audience looked down at the murderer that had been arranged on the wall like a specimen.

Overwhelming power-

There was no other word to describe the world's strongest.

Jin had remained calm from start to finish as he defeated his opponents one by one.

Necro, at the point when he saw Jin light a piece of styrofoam on fire, realized something.

Jin was an abnormal amongst the abnormals.

‘The reason why Jin is able to kill so easily probably isn't related to his sense of guilt, but rather, his worldview.’

A firm worldview.

Jin was completely different from those who had denied reality until their very end.

‘A monster made only for murder... I'm starting to like him more and more.’

Necro grinned.

I had prepared a lot more than this, but it managed to end pretty quickly.

I pulled out the refrigerator stuck to the wall and dug out the mush that used to be the Nail Hunter.

Murderers are unexpectedly rich, huh.

<Acquired [Platinum Diamond Bracelet].>

<Acquired [Natural Ruby Ring].>

This adds up to an amount of 320,000 dollars.

A chiptune played from the screen as I was taking my eyes off of the status screen, and a message popped up.

<Level up! [Heart of Gold (Lv.2)] has become [Heart of Gold (Lv.3)].>

<Gained a new ability.>

[Gold Achieves All = Heart of Gold] – An ability to buy anything with money.

– [Lv.1] Trade (Buy, Sell)

- [Lv.2] Purchase (Luck, Talent, Appearance, Charm, Health, Skill, Knowledge, Information, Ability, Life)

- [Lv.3] Finance (Currency Exchange, Savings Account, Checking Account, Money Transfer, Loans, Vault, Stocks, etc.)

Looks like the conditions for leveling up is the money that I possess.

Out of all the things that I gained, the ones that really stood out to me this time were loans and vault.

And stocks...

I closed the screen and looked up at the audience.

It was time for the finale.

Since I couldn't move my arms, I had to settle for putting one of my legs back and bowing lightly.

Just like a gentleman asking out a girl to a dance.

The audience began to clap.

They were sending praises towards me for my actions. How foolish.

“Amazing...! He’s on a completely different level!”

“Not even the one from last time was this strong!”

“I think we can actually expect something out of this one!”

I looked at the saint, who was the only one staying silent in the room, and left.

This should be good enough.

I had taken care of my opponents as flashily as possible, just as Necro had requested.

I would’ve acted much more efficiently otherwise...

“Hold on! Wait wait wait wait!”

Necro grabbed me from behind.

The audience began to turn this way again.

“Where do you think you’re going, Mr. Winner? Do you have anything to say for us before you leave?”

Necro glanced at my status screen and smiled brightly.

To think his demeanor would change just like this...

“I have things to read.”

“Oh my, really? Then I really shouldn’t hold you back. I’ll make this short, so answer a question of mine beforehand?”

“Before that, hands.”

“Hands?”

I waved my arms at him.

“Oh, right! Sorry, sorry. I guess I got too excited. Hold on. The way to take this off was...”

When he waved his finger in the air three or four times, the my restraints let out a “psh” sound and loosened up.

“.....”

I stretched out my arms and checked if my fingers were still working properly.

The audience seemed to cower a little just from seeing this simple action of mine.

I could read the fear and nervousness in their faces.

On the other hand, Necro seemed to be full of spirit.

“Why did you ask me to tie you up, idiot?”

He looked around, as if he was trying to inform everyone of this.

“This guy, this guy’s too full of himself! I tried to stop him, you know.”

These were all lies to trick the audience.

Lies to make the product, ‘me’, more appealing.

“He just came up to me before the fight, and, hah, do you know what he said? ‘You dare bring mere criminals to fight the world’s strongest’?”

He was presenting the product by using several key words.

He must be going this far because others have asked for me to be punished.

“Damn~ and here I thought he’d be at a huge disadvantage because he was summoned last. To think he’d take care of all of them even without using his arms. Don’t I really have an eye for people?”

He’s really saying whatever he wanted to.

“So? Your question?”

“Ah! It’s not much. Not much at all. Just wondering how you were so certain of winning. There must’ve been a reason, right? After all, you’re not the type to be so certain of such predictions.”

Oh, so that was it.

“Of course, it’s because...”

“Even with a power like that... Wow.”

Necro pointed at me.

“Ama~zing. Damn! Certainly above average! I pulled out a super strong one this time! Be it heroes or braves, they were all so-so at best in their normal worlds, you know? And I’ve managed to bring the world’s strongest to a place like this? Instant game over.”

Well, it’s not that simple...

“Ah~ sorry, sorry. You must be tired, and yet I’ve been keeping you here for so long. You should go now. I need to stay to talk with these people.”

I really liked this aspect of Necro.

He handled all the politics and left me the dirty jobs.

My eyes met those of the saint’s as she was walking down the stairs.

A dark face...

She must be like this because she saw people die just now.

Seriously, her worldview is extremely flawed.

Chapter 14. Entering The Path Of Magic

After returning to the shelter, I was thinking about what I would buy with the money I had.

I'd use 1500 dollars to pay back the priest,

and I'd have 320,000 dollars leftover.

Since I was already dead, I didn't need food.

I had enough clothes as well.

Right. At a time like this, guns are the best.

I tried searching for guns in the market.

[▷ Glock 17 Semi-Auto Pistol: \$539.00]

[Remington Model 870 Pump Shotgun: \$359.94]

[Mossberg 590 Pump Action Shotgun: \$399.00]

...

For now, I'll buy two pistols.

Next, I added a shotgun and a sniper rifle into the cart.

I'll get enough bullets to pretty much last me forever, I guess.

When I pressed the purchase button, a message popped up.

Ding.

<Transaction has been completed. The delivery should take eight hours.>

As I saw the transaction complete itself, I managed to admire the power of money for the first time.

Now, I had 280,000 dollars left.

I suppose I should get defensive equipment as well.

Simple body armor should do the trick.

I tried entering [armor, cheat, rare] into the search bar.

And I clicked search.

A list turned up in front of me with no lag whatsoever.

[▷ Cape of The Notorious: 32,000,000,000 dollars]

[Half-invincible shield: 150,000 dollars]

[Full Metal Jacket: 3,000,000 dollars]

[Second Dimension Spider: 1,000,000 dollars]

[The Impaler of Walakia: 8,000,000 dollars]

[The Second Stellar Battle Motor Dress: 26,000,000 dollars]

...

I didn't even dare buy it.

When I tried clicking on the products, I managed to see that each and every one of the items had ridiculous stats placed unto it.

But the only thing I could buy at the moment was the nameless armor that only gave me +15 defense.

I should just collect more cash...

I put the rest of my money in the bank, and used the exchange ability to create a single gold coin.

-1500 dollars.

The money that I borrowed from the saint.

“Here. Take it.”

I showed off a little bit as I handed the gold coin to the saint.

“You don’t need the interest, do you?”

The saint nodded weakly and took the coin.

No response, even from a joke.

Was she still thinking about the dead people?

I clapped my hands loudly in front of her.

The saint jumped up in surprise.

“Come back to your senses. You should be happy about having these murderers die. After all, there won’t be any more victims.”

The saint closed her mouth.

“How about you admit that you’re abnormal at this point?”

The saint wasn’t sane.

Well, I really wasn’t either.

“To think that you’re actually sad about their deaths. Nobody would actually feel that way unless the person were actually crazy.”

The saint blankly looked at my face for a moment, then opened her mouth.

“To think you’d try to discuss something called normalcy, I’m quite surprised. And quite contrary to what I look like, Mr. Murderer, I’m not very sad.”

She shot back immediately.

“Liar. You have a teary face.”

“Look again.”

The saint rubbed her face a few times and made a bright face as she let out a small ‘Nyaha☆’.

“.....”

Pretty cute.

“See? I’m not sad at all. Even if you were to die... Well, of course, you’re already dead, but... Even if you die, I wouldn’t shed a single tear.”

“That’s pretty much typical for everyone though.”

“Heh~ you say that, but the one who cries the most is?”

I lifted my middle finger.

“Oooh!”

She tried to kick at my leg, so I dodged.

She’s getting more and more used to hitting me.

I sat back down on the sofa on the other side.

“When are we leaving then? The tournament is over and yet, I haven’t received anything about the heroes that I’m supposed to kill.”

The saint stretched her arms upwards.

“Why do you live such a boring life? It’s not like the world would come to a stop even if you slow down a bit.”

After finishing her stretch, she twisted her upper body a few times.

“It should take about two days to get everything ready. Ah, if you just want to go outside, you can do that under my supervision. Or do you want to do something else...?”

Two days...

I could spend this time looking at a dictionary, but right now, it would be best to try ‘that’.

“Would it be possible to learn magic?”

I could buy it through the [Knowledge] market, but it would probably cost several million dollars.

Why would I buy something like that, especially when I had the strongest white wizard in the world in front of me?

“Magic? You must be really looking down on magic.”

The saint said this as she opened her frog wallet.

She then proceeded to take out thirteen books on magic.

“That’s a lot more than I thought.”

“If you thought magic would be so simple, that would be a miss steak!”

...Necro must’ve taught her that shitty pun.

“Get it now? The greatness of me being the strongest white wizard?!”

The saint puffed up her chest in pride.

“I am the greatest genius wizard that the [Abyss] has ever produced! One word from me, and all the male students would...”

I just pretended to listen to the latter part.

“...Get it, then?”

Finally, it's over.

“Hnn~, so you weren't listening?”

The saint raised her hands up in the air like a lion and threatened to take a bite out of me.

Magic, huh.

To think muttering to yourself like a crazy teenager would allow you to shoot out fireballs...

I laughed to myself, and opened one of the books.

And.

“Hah.”

I laughed again after reading a bit.

The book wasn't filled with mystical things and superstitions, but rather mathematics, science, and psychology.

“I'm good on my own, thanks.”

I waved the saint away and lay down on the sofa.

Books are meant to be enjoyed like this.

“.....”

Feels a little colder all of the sudden.

When I tried adjusting my vision a little bit, I could see that the saint had snuck up on me and climbed up on my back.

Plop.

I could feel a warmth on my back as the saint's butt softly landed.

That feeling soon changed to pain as my back caught on holy fire.

“Hot. Heavy. Get off.”

The saint ignored my words and grabbed onto my legs.

“Just what are you... geh!”

Crack!

My body's bending!

I could hear a few things in my body break as my hips bent backwards.

I quickly tapped the sofa and the saint finally got off of me.

What a crazy...

I sat back up whilst holding onto my hips.

“Ouch ouch ouch... where did you learn something like that? Didn’t I say I’d be fine on my own? Go do your own stuff. You’re busy, aren’t you?”

The saint sat down on the other side and laughed.

“Ufufu~! Stuff like that’s all handled by Necro. I’m actually quite free.”

God damn it, I knew it’d be like this.

Useless saint.

“How is it? I can teach you if you want.”

...Why’s she being like this?

“Hmm.....”

“Ah? Could it be that you’re suspicious of my actions? How annoying!”

I was a murderer.

A murderer whose face had melted off and wasn’t afraid to kill.

Perhaps she wasn’t that afraid of me because she had beaten me once already, but still.

Why was she being so kind to me?

There was no reason for her to act like this.

This girl really was abnormal, from beginning to end.

There’s no way she didn’t have any ulterior motives...

“Well, if you want to teach me that much, then sure.”

“Then, since I’ll be your instructor from now on, please call me ‘teacher’.”

That was your motive?!

“...Fine.”

“Good. Don’t you ever forget what you just agreed to, dear murderer student.”

She’s still not dropping “murderer”.

Fine, I’ll call her saint till the day she dies as well.

“Now then. The fun and easy magic lesson carried out by Morto Hai is now beginning! Yay~!!”

“Yay...”

I cheered her on a little bit.

Not doing so would probably make her angry.

“We’ll skip the introductions and the history lesson. Turn to page thirty six. The way of magic is a combination of tricks and magic. We’ll start here.”

She knew the content on every single page?

I realized that the saint possessed the skill called Total Recall.

“Remember how I said that at the core of your power, there was

magic? Using magic is quite similar to using power. You pray to a being that is able to use magic, that is, God, and channel his power through you.”

“So that chuuni chant that you always did was a prayer...?”

“Ahem! It’s embarrassing at first, but you’ll get used to it! And it’s not like you can only use magic by chanting. If you manage to pray to god desperately enough, magic might activate by itself.”

In other words, all according to the will of God.

Chapter 15. Connecting To The Orbis To Modify The Jin

The saint took a look at my face and asked a question.

“How is it? Not very hard so far, right? I’m pretty good at explaining, don’t you think? Try reading the page in the textbook.”

I took a look at the page, just as she had instructed.

[Magic is the act of locally recreating natura naturans.]

Complicated words.

“So if I were to use an analogy, it would be like calling a pizza place after looking at the menu, and if you pay the money (mana) in advance, the food (magic) would be delivered. Sometimes though, if a beggar comes in asking for food, the pizza place might give food for free.”

“You’re not wrong, but your analogy is too much like that of a peasant’s.”

“I was one from the start.”

“Let’s switch to a different topic. So then, what would sorcery be? Before I explain this, I need to tell you something, Mr. Murderer. Dokun dokun! Curious, right?”

She kept staring at me, so I had no choice but to answer.

“Waah, I’m curious...”

“Puhehe, don’t be surprised, alright? The hidden truth of this world...is! That this is actually a holographic universe! Dudunnn!”

A holographic universe.

It’s a theory that the world that we live in is fake, and the real world exists somewhere else.

I didn’t think I’d see something like this here...

“Surprised? Surprised? The wizards decided to call this true world the [Orbis]. Ah! I’m not saying that the world we live in is fake, though. It’s still real!”

Didn’t really matter what it was.

It wasn’t like the teacup in front of me would disappear just because it was a hologram.

“I get it. So what?”

“If the true form of this world was information, modifying this information would have real effects in this world, right? For example, if I was trying to boil water...”

The saint put her hand on the kettle that was on top of the table.

“I could directly convert mana to heat, but wizards simply modify the true world in order to achieve the same feat. This information in the true world is known as [Jin (真)].”

Jin...

“Same as my family name, huh.”

“It’s clearly different. One’s useful and the other one isn’t.”

“.....”

How persistent.

“Now, I’ll be using magic, so watch closely. You can’t see this anywhere else.”

The saint closed her mouth and carefully stared at the kettle.

“.....”

What the heck?

“.....”

Five minutes passed, but nothing changed.

Around the time when I thought something had gone wrong.

Blub blub! Piii-

The water boiled over and steam began to exit the kettle.

“Success~!”

The saint smiled, as if she had just pulled off something amazing.

“Did you see? Just in a single try too! And with sorcery at that! I knew my skills as the top student hadn’t gone away!”

“.....”

It’d be useless in a real fight.

The saint seemed to have read my thoughts, seeing how she was silently looking up at my face.

“You aren’t actually thinking that the result of boiling water like this was quite disappointing, are you? I’m quite annoyed. To think you wouldn’t see the amazingness of this...”

“No... it certainly is amazing that you did this without fire, but you only managed to complete it in five minutes?”

“This is why the ignoramus are...!”

The saint looked down on me. Well, at least, she tried with her shorter height.

I could visibly see her wanting to look down on me somehow.

“Listen carefully! I just managed to boil water without any chemical reactions. I just changed the water’s boiling point to achieve this feat.”

The saint drank the water, as if to demonstrate this.

The steam rising out of her mouth would make one think that the water was extremely hot, but judging by the saint’s reaction, the water was actually lukewarm.

“This is sorcery! See how amazing it is now?!”

“Do you have to calculate quickly to effectively use it?”

The saint narrowed her eyes at my question.

“That just now... Are you implying that I’m stupid?”

“No way.”

The saint’s probably this good already thanks to her total recall ability.

Modifying the jin inside the orbis...

For me, a person who couldn’t connect to the true world, I had no idea how this would work.

I wonder if it’s kind of like hacking?

“Hold on.”

I stood up and headed to the corner.

I was in a circular facility covered by thick stone walls.

“Was this... how it went?”

I gathered the mana in the air into my right arm.

The image I had in mind was a shockwave that I could shoot from my hand.

If I put my hand on the wall like this–.

“.....”

Funnily enough, nothing happened.

The saint stared at me curiously.

“Mr. Murderer? What were you trying to do?”

“Body enhancement.”

“Enhancement...? Why...?”

“Because body enhancement don’t require you to modify the jin. I thought I could do it, but it looks like I failed.”

The saint’s eyes sparkled.

“No! Your method wasn’t wrong at all! Being able to do this just

by watching me is amazing by itself!”

“Really? It was simple, though...”

“Simple... It takes about six months to learn that much, you know?”

“Something this easy?”

The saint banged on the table in frustration.

“Geeh! It’s not easy! It’s not easy at all!”

I don’t get it...

You just need to do it.

“Ah! Right. Here’s one thing that Mr. Murderer was mistaken about! You said body enhancement, but body enhancement actually isn’t just one magic, is it? It’s the collective term for several magic spells. For example...”

The saint disappeared from my sight.

When I tried looking up, I could see the saint standing upside down on the ceiling twenty meters up in the air.

“Jumping up, sticking to the ceiling... is also...”

I could see her green panties thanks to her flipped skirt.

“An unneeded service scene.”

The saint’s face reddened after hearing my critique.

Tap.

The saint jumped down from the ceiling and landed next to me.

She glared at me with all her strength.

Why was she acting like this, after showing me her underwear herself?

Was she trying to seduce me?

“You saw, didn’t you?!”

Her reaction was so typical that I didn’t even feel a hint of emotion.

To think that she’d think someone in this day and age would get excited over underwear.

“Too far for a clear view. Not interested either.”

The saint asked me a question with a suspicious tone.

“Really?”

“It’s just a piece of clothing.”

I didn’t get a response, so I tried looking at the saint’s face.

It had turned into something indescribably horrifying.

“M-Mr. Murderer just managed to scar the heart of a young girl. This hurt, this pain, I’ll never forget it as long as I live. I’ll watch you from now on, even from my grave.”

The saint had balled up her hands into a fist as she let out a string of nonsense.

I suppose I should respond one way or the other.

“You were a girl?”

“That’s what you’re confused by?! Ugugugu!”

The saint ripped at her hair and raged silently.

“It was a joke, a joke. I’m listening, so carry on. Ah, right. Before that, tell me about mana. I wasn’t able to store any even though I followed the book’s instructions on breathing.”

Mana was [The Remnants of The Soul].

Souls that have been corroded over time, or have sustained significant damage in the past, get destroyed in the world.

A part of this soul goes to the stars to recover, and the other parts get scattered into the world as mana.

“Hmm... You’re not just trying to change the topic, are you?”

The saint came up close to me.

“Well... Let’s see. Move your arm.”

“Don’t come too close. I’ll get burnt.”

I leaned back a little bit.

“What are you being so shy for?”

The saint kneeled, and started inspecting me from bottom to top.

“Hm, hmm... Hoh... This is...”

Her facial expression turned strange when she reached my chest.

“A flaw like this can’t be naturally produced... How strange...”

“Flaw?”

I covered up my chest as I asked the question.

Having a certain part of my body being intensely observed by a young girl was a strange experience.

The saint shook her head, as if something extremely unfortunate had just happened.

“Unfortunately, you can’t use magic.”

I can’t?

“Why? Ah, I just can’t use it right now?”

“No, it’s impossible for you to gather mana in the first place.”

“...Reason being?”

“Mr. Murderer, your organ that gathers mana is...”

She pointed at my chest.

“Lost.”

Lost?

“My heart?”

The saint gave me her final verdict with a grim face.

“Mr. Murderer, you have no ‘heart’.”

No heart...

I started thinking to myself after hearing this.

Because I’ve never had such a thing, I tried to narrow down its definition.

What was a heart?

Did it have something to do with empathy, or sensitivity?

Well, even without one, I've gotten through life without a problem...

"Well, whatever."

I gave up immediately.

It wasn't like I'd get it by thinking.

The saint sent me a sympathetic look from my reaction.

"It must be nice being so simple, Mr. Murderer. You're like an amoeba."

I lifted my middle finger as a response once again.

"Again with that..."

She tried to grab my finger, so I flinched back in surprise.

My finger would've burned if she managed to touch it.

The saint 'tch'ed, and sat back down on the sofa.

She then put one of her legs over the other, almost like a model.

“Corporal punishment will be applied from now on if you keep making such vulgar gestures. Yes, I’ll remember this rule till the day I die.”

“...You’ll hit me if I do something you don’t like?”

“For you, each hit will be filled with love. Please scream like a pig in happiness every time you get hit.”

“Not into stuff like that.”

“Oh, but you will be.”

This was probably the most shocking thing I had heard from her all day.

And two days after that point in time,

I managed to reach the last page of the book of magic.

Immediately after I finished reading, a ding went off in my head.

<[Magic (Lv.1)] acquired.>

So I can still learn it, despite not being able to use it.

The saint sat down on the other side with her head down. She had been muttering to herself for quite some time.

“No way... Just two days... Took even me a whole year...”

Her sense of shame was quite a sight.

Right, then.

The guns have arrived safely.

I suppose the time was perfect for me to take a look at my status screen again?

When I focused a little, a black window popped up in front of me.

The blank spaces are starting to all get filled up.

The new abilities that I’ve acquired were [Magic] and [Boiling Blood].

The abilities that were bought with Heart of Gold were marked as “Jin”.

I just need mana now...

I tried searching through the market using Heart of Gold.

But no matter how much I've searched, I couldn't find them selling a 'heart'.

Chapter 16. End-Game Equipment For A Noob Adventurer

On the day of departure.

The saint appeared with a bundle of goods.

Before I could ask her about what they were, she began to unload them onto the table.

Leather boots, a formal suit, and a tiny block.

“This is...?”

The saint extended her arms to the side in response.

“It’s all~ yours! Free of charge!”

No way.

Nothing in this world is free.

Instead of responding, I began to inspect the boots.

They were black and pretty much resembled military boots. The soles were quite rubbery.

[Dragon Boots] – Rank: D+

– Boots made out of the leather of [Black Dragon Balmuto]. They are sturdy enough to survive moving greater than the speed of sound. The boots are able to resist even lava when it comes to heat. It was created using strings, dragon muscle fibers, and was tied together using the string created by the bark of the world tree. The soles were made from dragon leather and its claw.

– Protects the feet from corruption and poison.

– Changes size according to its user.

Dragon leather.

But it's still ranked as D+?

The Oracle's grading scale seems to be quite strict.

It doesn't seem to have a special name, neither does it seem to raise any stats...

It doesn't even raise my defense points.

Well... This isn't a game, after all.

It's not like my defenses would rise just by wearing some shoes.

And this section of the boots are...

I tried applying some force to the heels.

A blade made of dragon bone appeared from the bottom of the boots.

It was almost like cat claws.

“Hm~”

“What's up with those suspicious eyes? I'm going to stab you if you keep looking at me like that.”

Of course I'd be suspicious.

These boots could easily fetch an enormous price on the market.

Even if we were comrades, there was no way I'd be gifted something like this.

Not unless the other side had ulterior motives.

“Why?”

“It’s a gift for winning in the battle.”

“The suit as well?”

It was just a simple suit.

No magic was applied unto it.

“You’re not planning on wearing that forever, are you?”

“What about it?”

The restraints have been taken away by Necro.

The clothes I was wearing now was a t-shirt and some jeans.

They were pretty big, which made it comfortable to move in.

They cost me around forty dollars.

The saint sighed to herself.

“Just take it and wear it when a dangerous situation arises. This is a gift of goodwill.”

Gift...

How troublesome.

I guess I'll repay her with an item of similar value later on.

“Ah, I suppose we'll have to make you wear it, to see if it fits?”

I shook my head.

“Later.”

The saint grinned brightly at my denial.

“Strip. Now. Or... Could it be that you have a fetish for having your clothes get ripped apart by a girl?”

I imagined the scene and immediately decided to strip.

If it wasn't for her holy element...

If it wasn't for the fact that I lost...

A little later.

I began to complain to the saint about how restricting the suit was.

“Tight.”

I could feel a strange gaze on me from my left.

When I turned around, I could see that the saint was looking at me with fiery eyes.

“Nn! Nn! Now you look like a human! I knew it’d look good on you? Uhehe!”

So I wasn’t even human before...?

I pulled down on the necktie with my finger.

This useless piece of scrap was just a symbol of growth and the modern world.

I didn’t need it.

“Annoying.”

I took it off and put it back in the paper bag.

I tried to take off the suit and put on my original clothes, but the saint managed to kick my butt.

The strength of the kick was almost enough to rival a kick from a Muay Thai Champion.

I looked back as I rubbed my injury.

I could see that the saint was pressing on her eyebrows, giving it her all to not let her anger get the best of her.

This is more comfy though...

I'd probably be exorcised if I said something like that.

I'll just stick with the suit.

I sat back down on the sofa.

"Hmm..."

"I'll actually stab you."

The saint raised her hand, so I stopped looking at her so suspiciously.

“There seems to be a misunderstanding, but it’s not like we’re expecting anything out of you for these pieces of equipment. I’m just giving you equipment that we just don’t use. Understand?”

Well, if you’re willing to go that far...

“Thanks.”

“No problem. You just have to pay for it with your life later. Your body will do just as well.”

“.....”

I put on the boots immediately and began thinking about what I was going to do with the suit.

I could sell it, but that wouldn’t be very nice.

There was a [Vault] ability in the finances section...

Should I use it?

I focused, and activated Heart of Gold.

Shaa!

The world turned white.

When I opened my eyes, I could see an endless expanse of land.

So this was the vault...

I couldn't see anyone inside.

Everything was white.

I should buy some containers for this place.

I put the suit on the floor and deactivated the ability.

Shaa!

The world became filled with color again.

I was back in the original world.

“Mr. Murderer~ Mr. Murderer~”

The saint was searching the sofa, as if she was trying to find a pet.

Her little butt was shaking side to side in front of me.

“I’m here.”

“Huee!”

The saint jumped up in surprise.

She turned to look at me.

“I was surprised by you running off like that! I almost contacted the health center because I got so worried!”

Health center...

“Sorry, I was just testing a new ability.”

“Tell me that beforehand!”

“Sorry, sorry.”

I didn’t know something like this would happen either.

To think I’d move to a different dimension...

Doesn’t this pretty much make me invincible?

It’s pretty good for dodging attacks as well.

Right. I'll experiment more later.

I should check on the presents first.

I grabbed the little block on the table.

A screen appeared in front of me.

[The History of Evil = Murderer] – Rank: S+

– An advanced weapon from another world. It was used by the [Mirage Belt].

The description itself seemed dangerous.

“Rank S+?”

The dragon boots were D+. Just how strong would an S+ be...

Seriously, this is suspicious.

The saint got rid of my suspicions soon enough though.

“Ah! Don’t think too much about ranks. It’s dependent on time. If I were to explain it, lower ranks are more primitive and higher ranks are more high-tech?”

That makes it quite difficult to determine the quality of items, doesn’t it.

“Isn’t Mirage Belt the demon king? What if there’s a curse...”

“Removed it.”

So there was a curse...

“The advanced weapon part?”

“It’s just a sword. Dunno why it’s called that.”

“Sword?”

Was it like a balisong or an OTF?

<[Murderer] acquired.>

I took Murderer in my hand and observed it.

It was a cube.

It was a cube small enough to fit in my hand.

The black base with a red line running through it certainly made it look like an electronic device.

One of its sides had the words [History Archive] engraved unto it. It didn't seem to erase itself no matter how much I scratched at it.

“Usage?”

I couldn't find any buttons on it.

There had to be a way...

“Put it in your hand and say ‘activate’.”

“It's voice-activated?”

“Yes.”

I followed her instructions with little faith.

“Activate.”

The moment I said it, my sight was filled with numbers.

Almost like one of those killer robots in movies.

<Xenoglossy confirmed. Primary language changed. Life force confirmed to be -52.6. Karma confirmed to be -10,285.8. Comparing Anima patterns. 78.5% difference.>

A machine-like voice rang off in my head.

<Lost signal. Escaped normal orbit. Please enter the coordinates manually.>

“It’s telling me to enter coordinates?”

The saint shook her head.

“I don’t know.”

<Understood. Current authority: 1. Switching to default physical form.>

Light began to shine through the red line of the cube.

Chuachuachua.

The cube began to lengthen.

Black particles were beginning to fill in the blueprint that lit up in the air and began to take form.

A demonic sword ended up being created by the end of it.

A black shine ran across the long blade, and the hilt of the sword shined like plastic.

<Restored 0.00002%. There are no abilities that can currently be used.>

Restored? Did the sword get damaged in any way? I can't really tell...

I got curious about my attack stats, so I opened up my status screen.

Status [Dead][Rot][Paralysis][Burn][Blind][Slow][Suffocation][Hunger][Weak][Cursed][Bound]

Level	1(EXP 0%)	HP	180/180(+0) <div><div></div></div>
Name	Jin (No Real Name)	MP	0/0(+0) <div><div></div></div>
Title	Menticide History's Worst Killer Heartless Monster	Attack	52(+10)
Class.	Corpse	Spell	0(+0)
Pers.	Pure Egoism	HP Regen.	2(+0)
Power	Heart of Gold(Lv.3) (\$28,000)	MP Regen.	0(+0)
		Defense	19(+0)
		Magic Res.	75(+0)

Abilities

Whitehead(Lv.9)	Menticide(Lv.9)
Xenoglossy(Lv.2)	Magic(Lv.1)NEW

Demon Eyes

Oracle(Rk.S-)	Floating Eye(Rk.D+)
---------------	---------------------

Jin

Boiling Blood(Rk.F-)

Equipment

Full Bloom(Rk.C)	Dragon Boots(Rk.D+)NEW
Murderer(Rk.S+)NEW	

Commodities

Glock-22 Pistol(x2)	DP-12 Shotgun(∞)
AR-15 Rifle(∞)	

Experience was still at zero percent.

My other stats hadn't changed either.

My attack points, though...

“Just ten?”

“It's a sword after all.”

It seemed quite obvious to her.

“But... as an S+ rank...”

“Swords are always set with an attack value of ten, unless they're bigger, heavier, or duller.”

“And ten is about...?”

“Many adventurers and scholars set the base health stat for a normal person at ten.”

The saint drew a diagram using the Oracle.

[Using a weapon of ten attack points to attack someone with ten health points and zero defensive points -> High chance of dying.]

How simple.

It's designed in such a way that as long as one knows how to add and subtract, it becomes possible to avoid danger.

The creator of the Oracle must've been quite a benevolent person.

But...

The saint kept talking.

"Now, here's a quiz~! If a person wearing heavy armor worth fifty defense points got hit in the head by someone with a sword of ten attack points, how much damage would he receive?"

A trick question.

"Forget damage, it'd just be an instant death."

"Correct!"

"So then... If someone attacks a person with ten defense points with a weapon with fifteen attack points, would the maximum amount of damage dealt be set as five points?"

“Mm... your calculations are correct. But it could end up becoming six points, or even ten points. After all, this isn’t a video game!”

This was the side effect.

Real life had too many variables, and humans were hard to predict.

Just by relying on the Oracle, you could end up with a horrible injury, or even dead.

“By the way, how can I turn this thing into a cube again?”

It was quite light, but it’d be annoying to carry it like this in the future.

Doesn’t seem all that useful either.

“Hold it in your hand and say, ‘initialize’.”

“Initialize.”

A machine-like sound rang in my head again.

<Initializing physical form.>

The sword deconstructed itself back into a cube.

“Hmm... This world has a lot of interesting things, doesn't it.”

To think a three dimensional object could be folded like paper.

Such a thing would've been impossible without a breakthrough in dimensional science.

“I don't think there's anything more interesting than you right now, though.”

Necro came into the room saying this. He was holding a blue bag in his hand.

Another present?

It was a midnight blue cape, as well as a helmet with four eyes on it.

The horns on top of the helmet made it quite easy to see that this was something Necro had picked out.

“I knew you wouldn't wear a suit, so I got you this.”

Why do they all want to clothe me so much?

“Thanks, I guess.”

“What’s up with that ‘I guess’? Just say thanks and be done with it! Dear, dear. Oh! Hey, hey, Morto, you should be the one to put it on for him. You aren’t that busy anyway.”

Necro handed the bundle of clothes to Morto.

“It’s a little awkward for me to clothe him, don’t you think? You probably saw his body when you put the bandages around him anyway.”

“.....”

So that happened.

The saint glanced at me after receiving the bundle, and began to walk towards me.

“Mr. Murderer, please come forward.”

I thought about refusing, but ended up walking up to her anyway.

“Sit down for a second.”

I lowered my body.

A helmet...

Were they there to hide my identity?

Once I put on the cape and the helmet, I ended up looking pretty cool.

Seeing how they didn't appear anywhere in the status screen, though, they didn't seem to be anything special.

“Oh~ You look pretty cool in that. Better than having your face out for sure.”

I began thinking as I heard Necro's compliment.

His attitude towards me had changed for sure.

Probably because of what happened at the battle.

If it wasn't for the new ability that I gained...

I ended up laughing at myself.

So powerless humans were worthless in the end?

As I thought.

Being the victim of such logic made me well aware of how terrifying the words were.

Chapter 17. Distribution Disputes

I took off the helmet and looked at the them.

“You guys, can you spare some time? I want to talk to you about something.”

“Something? What something?”

I began to talk.

“I think it’d be good for us to talk about how we’re going to distribute the spoils now, so that we don’t get into any conflicts later on.”

After that comes the sharing of information.

Necro made a shocked face after hearing what I had to say and he shook his head vigorously.

“Damn~ I’m fed up with this kind of stuff! It’s not like I’m robbing you of your money, am I? You’re quite a greedy one, huh? Of course, as leader, I’d get nine. You two get one. Share that among yourselves. Of course, this will be the case when our group succeeds in our mission.”

The saint banged on the table as soon as Necro stopped speaking.

“No way! Items all belong to the healer! Plus, in terms of level, aren’t I the strongest? How dare you noobs act like this in front of an expert!”

“Damn it, there’s only a one level difference. Expert my ass. All you do is heal people from the back!”

I decided that I made the right decision in bringing this up now.

“Now, now. Calm down a little. Necro, when do we leave?”

“A little later, at 11. Everything else is already on the move, so we can just take it slow. I think they’re getting ready for the departure ceremony right now?”

It’s nine right now, so...

“We have time. We can deal with the matter of distribution now and we can talk about information later.”

“Information?”

The two asked me this at the same time.

“I should know about my allies before I know my enemies, don’t you think?”

Necro responded with a remark that seemed to be mixed with sarcasm.

“Damn... how professional. Pros really are different, huh? Alright. We’ll do that later. And as for distribution... I’ll take 9 with the saint. You take 1. I choose what to give you.”

A scam, huh.

“It’s not that different from before.”

“Not that different? You had 0.5 before, and now 1, so it’s a 100% increase in profits, no?”

“...We should be fair.”

I could hear myself get tilted.

“Oh, really? We’ll go with a vote then. I say yea.”

The saint raised her hand when she saw Necro raise his.

“I say yea.”

This guy...

“I say nay.”

“2:1. We win. We get 9, you get 1.”

Unfair.

“At least do a 7:3...”

“Let’s go with whatever the majority says again. I say nay.”

“Nay from here as well.”

Hey...

“Unfair.”

“Unfair? I’m the boss, and I’m the one who’s making your body move. Of course it’d be us getting 9. Me? The strongest black wizard in the world. Her? She looks a little out of it, but she’s still the strongest white wizard in the world.”

The saint jabbed Necro’s side using her elbow.

“Ow, ouch! I thought my ribs were going to break! Are you unable to communicate without your fists or something? Anyway, where was I... Ah, yeah, she’s great. And you? A criminal.”

“.....”

“Now, try looking at yourself from an objective point of view. Remember what Socrates said? ‘Know thy position.’”

...More like ‘know thyself’.

“A noob. Poor as hell. Shitty level. Looks like hell. Uh, that last one was a joke, so let’s pretend you didn’t hear that?”

“No, that’s...”

“Did you do anything useful after coming here? Winning in a tournament? Just one thing? Go find a different job if you’re dissatisfied. We can just summon someone else.”

This guy was the incarnation of an abusive boss.

“You’ll be rewarded by the government if you complete the mission anyway. I’m doing this with that taken into account. And do you even know how much of my own money that I’m spending for this? You, a person who hasn’t done anything, is asking for a raise? I don’t think so. If you’re a proper member of society, and a logical person, you should say something after you achieve something. Right?”

I raised a white flag under his bombardment.

“Let’s change my rates the more stuff I achieve, then. I can’t back down any further than this.”

“Okay! Sounds good! Now, the first enemy we’ll face is [The Warrior], so if you take the leading role in taking him down... Uh, you might as well take everything he has. Let’s settle it with that. Otherwise, it’s all 9 to 1 like before. You good? Good? Good.”

“.....”

“Let’s try calculating. There are five to take down in total, right? Let’s say 100% of the warrior’s stuff goes to you. The others are 1/10 for four times...”

28%.

“...That’s lower than I thought... 28%! Uhh, it should be well over 33% with the rewards from the government.”

I took a look at the saint.

Seeing how she had tightly closed her lips, it seemed like she already knew.

“Isn’t that calculation wrong though?”

Necro raised his eyebrows at my response.

“Wrong? Where?”

He tried calculating with his eyes squinted again.

“...28. I’m right?”

“If the goods that the warrior has is not the same as those of the hero, it’d be unfair to assign the same value to their things.”

If the warrior possessed one million and the hero possessed ten million, I’d be experiencing a loss with this sort of calculation.

“Ah~ Right, right. You’re right~!”

Sounds like he knew already...

“What should I do, then? I didn’t think of going this far, but... That floating eye. I wonder how expensive it was?”

This would never end at this rate.

“Consider the floating eye as the part of the spoils and agree with the suggestion I came up with.”

“Deal. No paper contract needed, right?”

I shook hands with Necro.

The saint looked at this exchange with a look of disappointment.

“Well, that’s that with the distribution...”

Necro made a confused face for a second.

“We still have things to go over? Ah, what was that before? Information?”

“The information on our manpower and the enemy’s manpower, the amount of money we have access to, relations between every member between our groups, and etc. I want to know as much as possible.”

I had already memorized the geography of this world.

“Hmmm–”

Necro took a deep breath, as if he wasn’t really happy with my request.

“Hah... Information...”

He put his tongue against his cheeks.

He exchanged a look with the saint, then scratched his head.

“I don’t know about the others, but I can’t tell you our budget. Too sensitive a topic. The rest... wait. What coffin did I put it in again?”

Coffin?

Necro rubbed the symbol on his left hand.

The surface of his hand began to ripple.

Was that where he stored his items?

The coffin must be the Hero’s Coffin that Necro had.

“Ah! Here it is.”

After looking around for a while, he managed to pull out a thin packet of documents.

“For now, the formation and the first phase of the plan will go as written here, but you should know that the plan won’t go exactly as planned. This is real life, after all. Oh, and since that’s a secret document, be careful with it.”

I feel like I got this way too late, seeing that this was the day we were setting off...

Well, this must be because the First Subjugation Battalion and the Second Subjugation Battalion were the ‘planned’ forces, and the special task force had only been organized a while ago...

I memorized the contents of the documents and asked Necro a question.

“Any info on the warrior and the others?”

The plan would go with us taking down the warrior, the thief, the fighter, the summoner, and the hero in that order.

“Ah, we’re working on that right now. I’ll give it to you once we finish.”

So Necro was in charge of the task force and the saint was in charge of the information huh.

Now, the only thing left to do was to confirm their information, as well as to share mine.

This task that I was given wasn’t as simple as a ‘Ready-Fight!’ kind of a thing.

Each and every one of the enemies were strong enough to take out an army by themselves.

According to the document, there was an extremely low chance of the First and the Second Subjugation Battalion actually succeeding in their mission.

“Now then, show me information about yourselves. What can you do? What do you possess? What magic can you use?”

Necro made an annoyed expression at my request.

“Is that really needed? Well, I’ll show you, but... Yeah, I’ll show you. Hah... Just, that, I’d have told you to just shut up if you were any younger, but... I suppose I have no choice, considering how you’re a pro? You need it, right? For real? It’s going to get boring?”

Instead of responding, I just watched the saint laugh in the background.

Why was she laughing now?

“You were that curious about me? I would’ve answered if you had just asked. To think you’d drag Necro into it like this. You’re too shy!”

“.....”

Her mind must have nothing but a field of flower inside.

“Speaking of, you share first, saint.”

“And what about you, Mr. Murderer?”

“I’ll share last.”

Necro and the saint responded to that at the same time.

“Damn, so dirty!”

“To think a person would be so disgusting! Do you even know what the word ‘trust’ means? After all that I’ve done for you too! You really can’t trust me?”

“You were the one to ask for information first, so you might as well share first. You’re a pro, aren’t you? You should know about this kind of stuff.”

“Do it first! Do it first!”

Can’t hear.

“We’re going to waste too much time at this rate. What do we think about letting the lady go first?”

The saint shook violently when I tried this suggestion.

“Only at times like this people mention ladies first!”

“Let’s take a vote if you’re so dissatisfied, how about that?”

Necro and I raised our hands at the same time.

The saint muttered ‘damn males’ under her breath, as she raised her status screen.

Chapter 18. Useless Saint

The saint's HP displayed on the status screen was 19,500.

Even now, I couldn't believe that she had that much health.

She's only good for tanking...

"Should we just ask each other questions about each other?"

The saint retorted in an annoyed tone at Necro's suggestion.

"Should we hold another vote? Like a proper democracy?"

"Why are you angry at me?"

"Who should I be angry at, then? Ah! I suppose we can hold a vote to choose that as well?"

Girl really had a temper.

"Now, now. You can put off the lover's quarrel for later."

The two immediately shouted back at me.

“Lovers my ass!”

“Who said we’re lovers?!”

So shy, they are.

“The conversation isn’t getting anywhere.”

I said this, and immediately threw a question.

“First off, your titles. It’s not important, but... Why do you have two titles of a saint? It’s quite strange, don’t you think? Does the system just award titles to people who gets called by said title a lot?”

The saint stiffened a little.

But before anything got weirder, Necro shook away the question as if it was nothing.

“Don’t worry about it, don’t worry about it! It’s just a title.”

I could tell how shaken he was.

“Like you said, it just sticks when people call you by a certain title. That’s how it is.”

“Feels like you’re hiding something...”

“No, no! I’m not hiding anything! It’s not like you get stats when you get a title anyway, so why are you so interested in it? Move on, move on!”

I asked my next question with a suspicious feeling.

“Then tell me next about why you have -30 stats to your health regen...”

“That’s!”

Again, Necro paled when I asked this question. The question was directed at the saint though...

Was he supposed to be her manager or what?

What was she hiding?

That title, and the -30 to the health regen.

I couldn’t tell what they were planning.

“It’s fine. ”

The saint raised her hand, and stopped Necro.

“I’ll explain it myself.”

She took off the bracelet on her left arm, and put it on the table.

It was shaped in the form of a snake biting its tail.

[Snake of Infinity = Ouroboros] – Rank: D+

– Strengthens the effect of autophagy.

One word in particular struck out to me.

“Autophagy...?”

In layman’s terms, it would basically meant the cells would consume themselves.

The saint responded to this casually.

“It’s a diet bracelet.”

“.....”

So that's where the -30 to her health regen came from.

But that can't be the reason why Necro was so agitated.

As I thought, lies were mixed into this.

“So, what are the other items, then?”

The saint began to put all her items, except for her dragon boots, on the table.

I'll start off with the strange ring with spikes on it.

[Devourer Ring] – Rank: D+

– Instantly digests all food that is eaten, and allows one to eat up to three times one's own weight.

“A diet bracelet and a ring that lets you eat a lot...”

I'm supposed to make a disappointed face here, right?

It was a stupid pair of items, after all.

I tried thinking about the average person's reaction to such a

thing, and imitated it.

“.....”

The saint didn't respond.

I wonder why?

Wasn't she supposed to tackle me here?

Whatever.

Let's move on.

[Frog Wallet] – Rank: C

– A frog wallet every wizard from the Abyss possesses. Only the owner of the wallet can open it, and the wallet is big enough to contain about 500 liters of water. It is possible to take in objects bigger than the wallet itself.

I've seen it several times before.

The saint used it to store books and teacups inside.

Next is...

A beautiful ring.

It was created with a combination of green, blue, and red gems to form a flower.

[Promise of a Fairy King] – Rank: C-

– A ring that allows one to receive help from a fairy. However, it does not grant wishes.

So fairies did exist.

“I’ve seen enough of the items. Now, what kind of magic can you use?”

The saint grinned, as if she had been waiting for this question, and showed me her list of skills.

[Shining Buster] – The saint’s ultimate attack. She gathers holy power in her fist and punches. The afflicted area becomes healed. Be sure to coolly shout the name of the skill upon use.

[Shining Low Kick] – The saint’s ultimate attack. She gathers

holy power in her legs and kicks. The afflicted area becomes healed. Be sure to coolly shout the name of the skill upon use.

[Shining Dempsey Roll] – The saint’s ultimate attack. She gathers holy power in her hips...

I threw the list in front of me to the side.

“Are you stupid?!”

I’ve never seen someone so useless!

“You just put the word shining in front of everything! And since people get healed when you hit them, your attacks are meaningless!”

She heals by beating on her allies.

This was the saint’s fighting method.

The saint puffed up her nonexistent chest.

“Ahem! Just what do you think of me as? I’m a white magician. I don’t have any skills that harm. Ah! Of course, it’s possible for me to use light and water magic.”

I scrolled through the list of skills.

Every single one of them were strange blessings and healing skills.

She had no attack skill.

“I’m damn good at healing you know. Ah, using them on you should be super painful, though.”

That was the problem.

If I wasn’t dead, I’d have gotten a lot of help from her, but right now, I was a corpse.

I didn’t synergize properly with the saint.

“You should learn an attack skill.”

The saint smirked.

“I only need Shining Buster to beat you up.”

“That’s pretty much verbal abuse?!”

“Oh dear. You seem to be unaware of what healers do in a party. This is why newbies are...”

The saint crossed her arms and showed me a face full of disappointment.

What was up with her confidence?

Was there something that I didn't know as a newbie to this world?

“Just what is the role of the healer...?”

The saint raised her chin after hearing this question.

“The queen.”

“What the hell is that?!”

“Mm...”

She seemed to be deep in thought.

After thinking for a bit, the saint asked a question back at me.

“A person who gets served? Maybe?”

...I give up.

I'll just have to cross her off the list of combat capabilities. She's dumb, too.

"I'm done with the saint. Now, Necro."

"What do you mean, you're done?! I feel hurt?"

Yeah, whatever.

"Eh? What? You're done already?"

Necro stood up when he heard his name being called.

"Ok, just wait a second. Let me put on my equipment."

"You can just show me."

"I have to wear it later anyway."

I thought what he was fiddling with was a brown belt, but upon closer inspection, I found that it was a human spine.

When it was put it on his back, the spine stuck itself on.

Kigigigi!

Bones resembling centipede legs came out to cover Necro's body.

It was almost like Necro had his ribs growing outside of his body.

[Bone Collector] – Rank: C

- A magic armor shaped like a skeleton. Can shapeshift depending on how much danger the user is in. It can create various bone equipment, and it helps the user cast magic spells that uses bones.

- Bone Mountain: Collects bones in an alternate dimension. The collected bones are used to fix the Bone Collector when it gets damaged.

“This is my main armor. My weapon is...”

Necro took out a knife from of his coffin, spun it on his hand once, and put it in his scabbard.

It was the weapon that ate the children.

“Gebesh. Remember it? The knife that eats flesh. Its stats are awesome and all, but there's one problem with it.”

“Problem?”

“It’s cursed. If I just leave it out, a cannibalistic demon gets summoned at night. Quite a troublesome one to boot.”

“A demon...”

“Yeah, it exists. It doesn’t even have skin, and yet it’s damn hard to kill. Gets pretty annoying. That’s why I decided to seal it up while I use it. It’s still pretty good, though. Cuts well.”

He should probably be able to use that in his necromancy as well.

He might use Gebesh and the Bone Collector to create a meat puppet.

I summed up my feelings for that weapon in one sentence.

“Looks like it’d appear in a horror movie.”

“Right? I always ask people to do a test of courage using this knife, but they all refuse. I don’t get them.”

“Of course they’d refuse.”

“Hey, what about this is so wrong? Isn’t it fun? Pretty real?”

“You can revive with Overdeath whenever you want.”

This guy wasn't sane either.

Necro sat down on the sofa.

“Despite being a murderer, you're kind of a coward, aren't you?. Isn't a murderer supposed to be friends with a cannibalistic demon?”

“You think I'm a monster?”

“You are a monster though. Ever seen a corpse talk?”

I want to talk to someone normal.

I ignored Necro and checked out Gebesh's stats.

+0.2 to health regen.

Since a normal person's health stat was 10, holding it for fifty seconds would heal just about any wound.

Of course, it wasn't anything compared to the saint's health regen, but...

Suddenly, a question came into my head.

“Do you actually know how to use knives?”

“Do I know how to?”

Necro grinned, took out the knife, and threw it.

The knife managed to slice a centipede on a column perfectly in half.

“Didn’t It tell you? If you don’t throw away the stereotypical view of a mage in this world, you’re going to get killed really fast? You can’t think of them as normal scholars. Think of them as demons equipped with guns. That’s what a mage is in this world.”

I turned to look at the saint.

“A demon, huh...”

The saint, who had been munching on a cream bun on the sofa, hugged her bread as if it was going to get snatched right away from her.

Her puffed up cheeks reminded me of a squirrel.

“Uumph omph mmph omm?”

Omph..?

How dare she act cute.

This damn useless saint.

Chapter 19. Two Unique Passive Skills

The saint swallowed the bit of bread in her throat, and growled like a mother cat protecting her young.

So this bread addict was the strongest white wizard in the world...

I decided to stop paying attention to this idiot and turned around to Necro.

“The rest?”

“Just look at their stats. Don’t touch. They’re dangerous.”

Necro warned me of this and showed me a skull ring.

[The Hunger of The Sea of Death = Aquinad] – Rank: C

– A ring crafted out of the bones of the demon fish, Aquinad. Those who touch the ring will get his life force absorbed and die. It strengthens the effects of necromancy.

In other words, it absorbs HP and MP.

Those who have low health would probably get sick or die instantly.

“I’m fully armed now, alright? Take a look. No need for blessings, yeah?”

Necro posed like a model with Gebesh in his hand.

He really had a unique personality.

I nodded and took a look at his status screen.

Status [Thirst][Hunger][Strength][Blessing]

Level 8 (EXP 94%)

Name Necro Kill (Korea)

Title Undertaker
Death Researcher

Class. Human

Pers. Disease of Death

Power Overdeath (Lv.4)

HP 95/95(+0)

MP 3,000/3,000(+0)

Attack 2(+0)

Spell 120(+50)

HP Regen. 0.5(+0)

MP Regen. 5(+0)

Defense 15(+0)

Magic Res. 20(+0)

Abilities

Xenoglossy (Lv.2)

Black Magic (Lv.9)

Demon Eyes

Oracle (Rk.S)

Dissection Eye (Rk.C)

Artifacts

Hero's Coffin (Rk.A-)

Equipment

Dragon Boots (Rk.D+)

Aquinad (Rk.C)

Bone Collector (Rk.C)

Gebesh (Rk.C-)

Inventory

Potion(x1)

Spellstone(x4)

PainChest(∞)

His HP seemed pretty low compared to his MP.

But if one took into account the fact that a normal person had an HP of 10, it was pretty damn high.

He really felt like a dark wizard.

“Right. You should be at least this strong to be the world’s strongest.”

Necro grinned at my complement.

“Hey, hey, don’t get me all excited now.”

The saint perked up her ears and made an expectant face, but I ended up ignoring her completely.

32 for attack and 205 for spell power...

Since the saint told me that a bladed weapon was worth about ten points, this was quite large.

I think 45 defense would be enough to block a blow from an artillery cannon?

The defense stat should rise rapidly as long as he reinforces himself with a bit of mana.

And that 205 for spell power would mean that he would be able to perform 20 times better than he would with a knife using spells.

“What about the spellbooks?”

“Spellbooks?”

Necro made a confused expression at my question.

“Weren’t you holding it when we met the first time?”

He had fifty two of them at that.

“....Eh? Uh. Ah~ That~?”

Why was he acting like that?

“I sold it! Yeah. I was low on money. Times are getting hard.”

Lies.

Both the saint and Necro were hiding things.

Just what was he planning with the spellbooks?

“Ah, hey, let’s move on already. Gotta finish this quick.”

Necro rushed me, as if he was trying to change the subject away from my suspicions.

...Well, I guess it doesn’t matter.

Doesn’t really matter as long as I get items and money.

“Now, the spellstones are basically scrolls that can be used multiple times. I guess there’s only one thing left then?”

The next thing Necro took out was a black box.

Each corner was decorated with the carving of a screaming man.

[Portable Torture Chamber = Pain Chest] – Rank: C

– A tool of black magic that forcibly awakens someone’s power. Transfers the consciousness of those whose blood touched the chest inside to show them unimaginable pain. Most die from the excruciating pain, but those who do survive awakens to their powers.

A tool that awakens powers...

“It’s nothing. Just an antique, you know? They used to make soldiers out of these, but the success rate was so low that they just gave up on it?”

“Is that so? Then next... Hero’s Coffin.”

“Hero? Ah, that. Uh, coffin, coffin... It’s just... You know how we’re going to kill the hero by the end, right?”

He was making things up again.

“They need to die, but you know, we still gotta bury them properly. You know how countries honor the deaths of famous people? It’s like that. It’s not really used for anything other than my storage device right now.”

It’d be just a waste of time to dig further.

The man just had too many secrets that I didn’t care about.

Those other than me were worthless, after all.

Necro kept talking about his abilities as I thought such things.

“And... As for the magic that I can use... I can use necromancy and earth magic... And fire. Pretty good, don’t you think?”

The saint uses light and water. Necro uses earth and fire.

Their elements clearly showcased their personalities.

“I think I explained pretty much everything with this? We can see the rest later in battle. Words have their limits after all.”

“That’s right! It’s your turn now, Mr. Murderer!”

The saint glared at me from the sofa.

“I want to hear about the source of your inhuman strength and your two skills!”

Does she think this is a formal hearing or what?

“I get it.”

I was planning on telling her from the start.

“Before that, though. I wanted to ask you something, Necro.”

“Eh? What? I told you everything though?”

“No, not that. I want to know about the limits of my body. I’m a dead person, remember?”

“Yeah?”

“I remember you saying that you’d cancel the magic on me if my body was severely destroyed during the royale.”

“Ah! Yeah. You have good memory~”

“Does that mean as long as you don’t stop feeding me mana, I won’t die no matter what happens to this body?”

“No.”

The saint was the one to answer.

“If more than 50% of the liquid in your body is lost, you will die. Necro’s magic only holds your soul within the liquid of your body... If the link between the liquid and the soul becomes weak, you will die.”

I thought of a game character that you would control with a joystick after hearing this explanation.

The amount of liquid in the body would be HP.

If the losses become too big, connection would be lost.

As I thought, that's how it worked....

I understood why I 'couldn't feel the realism in life'.

“Alright. I get it. I suppose it's finally my turn, then...”

I suppose I should start off with the story of how I came to be.

After organizing my thoughts, I began to explain my origins to them.

The late 16th century.

A scientist couple managed to come up with a theory that advanced society by almost three generations.

This couple, instead of sharing this information with the world, decided to keep it for themselves.

Of course, they weren't sealing the information away.

They decided to use the technology for themselves and only themselves.

The reason why this was possible was because of one thing.

A hereditary knowledge transfer ability known as Whitehead.

Thanks to this ability, the family of the scientist couple began to rapidly gain power.

The companies this family created grew day and night.

By the 20th century, the family managed to create the strongest military force in the world, and became an international organization.

Later on, Whitehead managed to create an underwater colony for themselves, and created a system where they would be able to live without support from the outer world.

“Colony?”

Necro asked a question.

“Have you never seen an SF movie before? It’s an environment that allows humans to live in conditions where they couldn’t have lived in before...”

“Ah~ That? I know that. Your family made one underwater? Is that possible?”

“Cold fusion was already achieved in the 18th century. Making a

colony isn't much."

"Dang~ What next?"

"I believe they focused on creating a thoroughbred after that point. To try to reach outer space."

Each generation of Whitehead was developed by matching superior genes together.

What was created in the end was a species that could survive even in space.

"Homo Sapiens Caelus. I'm the first of its kind. A [designed human] if you will."

"Ah..."

After nodding a few times, Necro opened his mouth.

"Is he a sufferer of Chuuninbyou? It's a little... weird for his age. I thought he was crazy, but..."

"And you think it's ok to say all those weird spells for the sake of black magic?"

Necro shut up at my retort.

Our eyes met for a split second.

We both decided not to talk further about this matter in a silent agreement.

“In any case, you’re a modified human? I get where that strength comes from then. It’d be impossible for anyone to be that strong without mana otherwise. Alright.”

Necro lowered his posture.

“But you know, I’m only accepting this because I’m a wizard myself? If you tell this to anyone else... They’ll think you escaped from a psyche ward? Ah, sorry, sorry. Keep going. Whitehead, was it?”

“I suppose... This would be a unique passive skill of sorts.”

It was dangerous to reveal one’s skills to other people, but the gains I’d get in the future made this risk worth it.

The man would have probably found out about it later anyway.

I opened my status screen, and showed its contents to Necro.

[Hereditary Memories = Whitehead] – A unique genetical skill

that only exists in the family of Whitehead. Transfers one's knowledge to descendents.

Necro thought for a bit, then threw me a question.

“Transfers knowledge?”

“Think of it as me having a hard drive in my head. The only side effect would be that I'd have to sleep a bit longer?”

The organization of information took quite some time.

“And there was, what was it? Cold something?”

“Cold fusion.”

“That should be in your head as well?”

“Of course.”

“Oh~ What about your last ability, then?”

I opened up my status screen, and showed the info to Necro again.

[Ultimate = Menticide] – A structure of thought that allows one to find, analyze, and make use of information that would allow one to kill someone efficiently. If ‘soul’ is a base OS that is installed in the brain, Menticide is an updated OS made to kill others. There is a severe side effect that comes with it, but such things can be overcome with some effort.

Necro read the contents once and let out a complaint.

“Who wrote this damn thing? So hard to understand. What does it even do?”

I summarized the ability in one word for him to understand.

“An ability to find out ways to kill people.”

Necro’s eyes turned serious.

Chapter 20. The Power Of Authority

After finishing up my preparations to leave, I followed the Necro and the saint out of the shelter.

In the field outside was a group of soldiers all armed with submachine guns. There was a group of soldiers all armed with machine guns in the field outside.

They didn't seem that different than modern soldiers.

“These people are the special task force?”

Necro shrugged.

“Pretty small eh?”

There was only about fifty of them.

“I thought there'd be around eight hundred.”

“Why so worried? There's you and me.”

Necro seemed to trust me a little more than before.

I wonder if I can ask him for some money if I manage to persuade

him a little.

“There’s me too you know?”

The saint raised her hand and began jumping.

“What? You haven’t gone back home yet?”

I chipped in at Necro’s joke.

“Just throw her away.”

A little boldly.

“Throw me away? What?!”

The saint balled up her fists at me and Necro.

“I think we can just leave her here...”

I was being honest.

The girl was just plain useless.

“Eyy!”

The saint used her tiny fists to beat away at my body.

Tudadada!

I could even see the afterimages of her strikes in the air.

“It hurts! It hurts! Stop!”

The saint only stopped after she was beating me up for a while.

“Ah, you two wait here for a moment. I need to deal with something.”

Necro walked over to the soldiers after saying this.

Looks like he’s trying to say a speech before leaving.

When Necro left, the saint began to tug on my clothes.

“...What?”

“Um...”

She took me behind the building.

“What is it?”

“I need to see a fairy for a second...”

“Bathroom fairy?”

“Flower fairy.”

Her face got closer to me.

“It’s a flower fairy!”

“...I get it, so go already.”

“I don’t think you get it, though... I told you, right? I put a magic on you. Be careful to not stray too far away from me. Always stay next to me. Like a slave. Like a dog.”

She’s really saying whatever she wants.

“I’ll get a warning noise in my head before I die, right?”

“You’ll hear my voice of death, so don’t worry.”

“.....”

“Ah! If you try to peek using your Floating Eye... There’s no need to explain what I’ll do, is there? I warned you?”

“Never thought about doing such a thing. Aren’t you a little too lewd? You’re just a high schooler.”

I got kicked.

“Just wait here quietly! I’ll quickly come back!”

The saint hopped into the building like a tiny squirrel.

...Should I take a smoke while I wait?

I took out my e-cigarette from the cartridge.

It used a special mixture between nicotine extracts and mana potions.

It allowed the user to increase his physical capabilities for a short amount of time.

I lifted the visor of the helmet slightly and put the vape in my mouth.

Pii-

A green light lit up in the LED and the liquid inside the cigarette turned into vapor.

When I took in a sip, my neck began to burn up as if I was inhaling some fire.

I feel way better now.

To think pain would be the only thing that makes this world feel a bit more real... How ironic.

Phew-

When I let out the smoke in my lungs, my body turned cold again.

It was because my brain turned active again and recognized that my body turned cold.

I'd have to smoke quite a bit to keep my body moving from now on.

I leaned back on the wall and watched the people pass.

The soldiers that weren't involved in the mission were checking on the supplies for the mission.

As I thought, they didn't have cars, huh.

Our plan was to go over the hill by foot and take the train from Transgression Station.

After that, we'd get off at Boiser Town.

The place where we were headed was the [Sword Tomb], Volez.

It was a town famous for its sword craftsmanship.

Inside the document Necro gave me, it was said that the Warrior often got his gear checked out in this town.

And since the man liked to travel, he didn't have any guards with him.

How unsafe. Or did he really have the strength to protect himself?

But in any case, it was a foolish move to travel alone. The man was practically asking to be attacked.

“Hey!”

To think a brave like him, who's wanted by the government, would have the gall to stay within the country.

The government wouldn't have decided to perform such a large-scale military operation on him if he was outside the country.

All of this was caused by the Warrior's needless confidence in his strength.

"The bastard's ignoring us, isn't he? Hey, you! Yeah, you! The one smoking over on the wall!"

I turned my head.

I could see a young man glaring at me.

He had a military cut along with tanned skin. He seemed pretty muscular.

"Damn-He's quite strange, isn't he? Looks like a mummy."

The soldier threw the bag in his hand onto the floor.

The bag that seemed to weigh around 10 kg fell down on the floor with a 'thump'.

"What are you doing, you dumbass? Start working. You think you're on a picnic?"

I get it.

So I'm a soldier now, just like them?

I should be closer to a volunteer though...

What should I do?

If I kill him, we'd lose manpower.

If I let him live, he'd make things annoying for me later.

But then again, leaving someone this rebellious alive would be annoying when I have to issue commands.

“Hey, take this as well.”

The soldiers around threw their bags at me as well.

Everyone else began to follow them.

They were probably thinking that I wouldn't be able to fight back, considering their superior numbers.

“What the hell is he? Is he mute?”

“A person who just came into the military a month ago is supposed to be my superior? No way.”

“Battle Royale my ass. In the end, he’s just a criminal.”

“I heard you were with a high schooler. Did you have fun?”

The soldiers didn’t approach me.

They all kept their distance.

I could see hostility in their eyes, but I could also see that their bodies were all quite tense.

Of course they would be. They probably heard the rumors.

“The reason why you’re picking a fight with me.”

The soldiers flinched.

“1. I killed soldiers while trying to escape. 2. Soldiers you know want me to be punished. 3. The top told you not to pick a fight with me. 4. You want me to be punished, but don’t know how to get me punished. 5. You think your superior numbers will render me unable to do anything. That’s what led you to pick a fight with me.”

That was what I could get from their actions.

“Am I right?”

“.....”

Looks like I was. I suppose there was no way killing soldiers wouldn't have consequences.

I put the e-cigarette into the cartridge.

I thought I was done with the major's case...

I suppose there were victims that I haven't really thought about.

I bowed towards the soldiers.

“I apologize.”

Fake apologies were the best course of action here.

I could kill the soldiers, but that would bring about too many problems.

Just taking their bullying wouldn't be very smart either.

If I just act a little apologetic here...

“What the hell are you guys doing?!”

Necro managed to appear just at the right time.

The soldiers simultaneously turned around and saluted.

This was partly because Necro was their leader, but more so because he was a ‘wizard’.

Wizards in this world were subjects of fear and despair.

There was no reason why the soldiers wouldn’t be afraid.

“Hah~ God damn it.”

Necro looked over the soldiers with a surprised face, then turned to me.

“What do you want me to do to them? Damn it, I’d have never expected anything like this to happen.”

Should I... Stop him?

I think it’d be good if I went with the scenario of me being the unexpectedly good guy.

“Stop it. It’s all my fault anyway. I need to take my punishment.”

No need to find excuses.

Excuses would just make people hate me more.

“What did you do wrong? These soldiers just made you bow down to them just because they didn’t like you, didn’t they? What kind of a crazy situation is this?”

The soldiers were at fault now.

“Pushup positions. Now.”

Dust began to rise as soldiers got in their positions.

Nearly fifty people went into the pushup position.

“Should I punish them according to military law? Hey, Sergeant Kim.”

“Yes sir!”

The closest soldier near him shouted out loud.

This guy was working as a soldier even in a different world...

Well, I guess he didn't have much of a choice, considering his only other option was prison.

Necro walked over to Sergeant Kim.

"Let me ask you this. What happens in the battlefield if one disobeys the command of a higher officer?"

"The person will immediately be disposed of!"

"Correct. You may stand."

He takes care of the man for being a fellow Korean...

"I'm not gonna do this again. Do this again and... You get it?"

The man was basically threatening the soldiers with death.

I could see the soldiers turn pale after hearing this.

They must be really regretting their decision right now.

"You should understand that I just saved your asses right now. Do you even know who you were trying to pick a fight with?"

Just what was he...

“If this guy feels like it, he could just wipe you in three seconds. You think I’m joking? Roll left.”

The ground shook.

“Oh? You guys are getting relaxed already, huh? Roll right.”

The ground shook again.

“They must be tired from all the work. You should really stop...”

Carrot after the whip.

The saint appeared as she said this.

If Necro was the boss, she must be his assistant.

“Did you go see your fairy’s extended family or what? You took so long.”

The saint kicked my shins.

Ugh...

The pain revived in my leg for a bit.

“...Stand.”

Dust rose up and the soldiers all stood up.

“I’ll think about what to do with you after seeing how hard you work today. Just know that I, as your leader, have become very disappointed with you. Understand?”

The response was small.

Necro’s voice turned ferocious.

“You sons of bitches? Fine, I’ll give you what you want.”

He only became finished with them after making them roll for five more minutes.

Even though the weather was quite chilly, the amount of sweat on the soldiers made it feel like otherwise.

Their backs were drenched with sweat.

Any sense of justice they might’ve had before was probably drained away by exhaustion at this point.

Plus, they probably valued their life much more than petty revenge.

We walked up a steep hill.

Brown leaves were scattered all over the path.

It really was fall.

A little while later, a forest filled with maple trees appeared in front of us.

Inside the forest was a giant graveyard.

The rows upon rows of grave posts made the entire scene quite eerie.

“This is?”

“The graveyard for the summoned ones.”

The saint seemed to be trying to hide some kind of emotion in her voice.

“There’s a lot of them.”

Around five hundred.

I didn’t feel much. The deaths of others didn’t really have much to do with me.

It was hard enough trying to look after myself.

These other people were probably just unlucky.

“Accidents?”

“Well, there were accidents, but most of these are just failed summonings. They were summoned without their bodies or heads.”

The one to answer my question was Necro.

“Did you know? We had three failed summonings before we managed to summon you. I really thought we failed by the time you had arrived.”

“The success rate must be quite low.”

“Well, it is quite far away. And it’s not like a person would stay still for a long time. Trying to estimate their coordinates based on

their movement is... Phew~ It's impossible."

Perhaps sitting in the electric chair ended up being a blessing for me.

"Isn't it quite accurate already though? You'd need to calculate the planet's revolution and rotation, and not only that, the rate in which the universe expands."

One had to calculate a person's exact location according to time.

"Ah, we already have equations for those. We aren't wizards just for show you know."

A plain appeared before us.

"Well, even so, it does get quite scary at times. One little mistake, and we'd end up summoning the sun or a black hole. This much is amazing already, but I can't help but wish for a safety decide..."

An ability to be able to locate a specific target and summon it into a different world...

"If it's possible to summon a human, wouldn't it be possible to summon wealth, food, and weapons into this world?"

If they didn't do this, despite it being possible...

I could guess just how much mana this operation usually took when I thought this much.

“How wonderful would that be? We could just summon things whenever we wanted it. But the thing is... The cost to summon one thing from a different world is worth a single year’s budget for the department of defense. You get how much money we spent on you now? You’re quite expensive~ You might not think of yourself as one, but the people at top already regard you as the nation’s property. You’ll probably have an inspector come for you later even.”

“Inspector?”

The saint answered this one.

“It isn’t much. He’ll just appear like a ghost, ask a few questions, then disappear. You just have to be honest. Never lie.”

“If I lie?”

“I don’t know. I never lied.”

Liar.

The road in front of us began to slant downwards.

I could begin to see a black train reveal itself in front of us as we

made our way downhill.

Chapter 21. A Report On The Undying

The scenery quickly changed outside the window.

We left the forest that we were in, and a giant plain appeared before us.

Honk–

After the horn sounded, an announcement by the captain rang through the train cars.

[Thank you for boarding. This train is headed for Hope, and it has departed from the station Kuboren, Kuboren station...] Thanks to Necro buying the entire carriage for ourselves, it was quite spacious and nice inside.

This is what trips are supposed to be like.

Thanks to this being the VIP room, there was quite a lot of space inside.

I decided to let Necro take the room in front of mine.

Who knows? The man might snore.

“Hah!”

The saint leaned back the two chairs and lay down.

Since it took eight hours to get to our destination, Volez, it seemed that she was going to sleep.

“I get to have such nice treatment thanks to Mr. Murderer... I must’ve acquired quite a bit of positive karma... heh.”

You’re kidding me.

The saint pretty much melted into her seat.

She almost looked like a cat in that position.

“.....”

“What’s with the lewd eyes?”

“The soldiers are all traveling while standing up, and here you are lying down like a lazy pig. How about you try doing a handstand for the rest of the trip out of atonement?”

The saint made an annoyed face at my kind advice.

“Would the soldiers feel more comfortable if I did a handstand? No. I’m corrupted through and through.”

“Demon.”

“I’m gonna go to hell anyway, so I might as well enjoy life now.”

“In any case, give me the documents I need to see.”

I saw one of the soldiers hand the saint a document before getting on the train.

“You’re quite the workaholic, Mr. Murderer.”

The saint began to move her bare feet.

I was wondering what she was trying to do with it until she managed to dig out the document with her foot.

This girl, she doesn’t even want to sit up?

“Here it is. The updated information on the Warrior.”

“Smells like feet.”

“Does not. Are you sure you aren’t mistaking the smell of flowers for smell of feet? Here, indulge in the smell.”

I dodged as she tried to rub her feet into my face.

Feels like her treatment of me has worsened recently...

I'm acting a lot bubblier than usual to fit her personality, but I'm still a murderer...

I took the document and looked down.

The saint's skirt slid up, creating a crack that allowed me to see some sensitive areas.

"I can see everything."

"Don't care about you seeing it."

The saint responded dryly and rolled towards the window.

"....."

Students these days can be quite scary.

Thank god she's not treating me like a bag of trash.

I took out the document from its container.

The first page had the word “classified” stamped onto it, and the next page had a picture of a blonde teen on it.

He looked like...

A model who exercised vigorously.

The name of the person was Romeo Smith.

AKA “The Warrior”.

He was one of the key members of the hero’s party, and he worked as a tank.

In the document, or rather, report, was detailed information on his stats, achievements, and items.

Let’s... check out his stats first, shall we?

When I turned to the next page, the Oracle created a copy of the status page in front of me.

Status [Normal]

Level 10(EXP %1)
Name Romeo Smith(USA)
Title Undying
Sword Dancer
Class. Human
Pers. Necrophobia
Power Memento Mori(Lv.8)

HP 3,200/3,200(+0)
MP 0/0(+0)
Attack 60(+50)
Spell 0(+50)
HP Regen. 6(+0)
MP Regen. 0(+0)
Defense 70(+80)
Magic Res. 50(+50)

Abilities

Xenoglossy (Lv.2)
Imagine Citadel(Lv.9)

Dragon Blood(Lv.1)
Zenith Crown(Lv.9)

Demon Eyes

Oracle (Rk.S)

Equipment

Hirganrel(Rk.C)
Swordmonster(Rk.A)
Devourer Ring(Rk.D+)

Olgorad(Rk.B)
Dragon Boots(Rk.D+)

Inventory

Potion(x3)
Gorinto(∞)

Spellstone(x3)

“Level 10...”

He was two levels higher than the strongest white wizard in the world.

“How strong is he?”

The saint responded vaguely to my question.

“Around three times?”

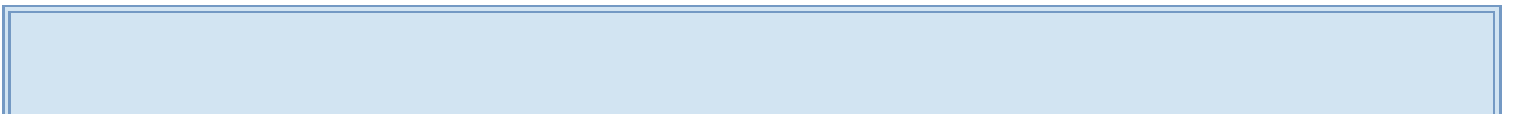
“Eh?”

“...If a level one is an average person, a level two would be able to defeat two average people in a small room. It keeps going up like that. Level threes are able to take on two level twos, and level fours are...”

“So two level nines can never beat a level ten?”

“Well, it’s not ‘absolute’, but... yes, that’s pretty much how it goes. But in front of [Memento Mori], it doesn’t matter how many level nines are involved.”

The saint was talking about the Warrior’s power.



[Memento Mori].

“Remember you must die”, in Latin.

A phrase that the slaves of Rome shouted at the general who returned from a winning battle.

[The Undying = Memento Mori] – An ability to overcome death.

- [Lv.1] Predicting Death (Able to feel killing intent and oncoming threats of death)

- [Lv.2] An immunity from death by fatigue.

- [Lv.3] An immunity from death by injuries.

- [Lv.4] An immunity from death by poison, sickness, or foreign elements.

- [Lv.5] An immunity from death by loss of blood, amputation, or any loss of a body part.

- [Lv.6] An immunity from death by heat radiation, or any form of cell injury.

- [Lv.7] An immunity from death by loss of air, food, or water.
- [Lv.8] An immunity from death by age.

Level 8...

I guess one thing I should be thankful for is the fact that he's not immune to everything.

“About level six. Did you guys ever try using radiation or electricity?”

“We tried using a beast that could let out lethal amounts of electricity, and a golem that let out radiation, but none of them worked! Ah, the electric beast gave him some trouble.”

“.....”

Wasn't specific enough.

He might as well be immune to all sorts of death.

“Undying, huh...”

In the past, the standard for death was “the heart coming to a stop”.

In the present, the standard for death is becoming brain dead.

I wonder what the standard would be in the future?

Would the standard for death be the breakdown of cells?

Would it be possible to call someone who can't do anything "alive"?

Let's try widening the meaning of life and death.

What is life?

What is death?

Would I be considered to be alive?

After reading the abilities granted by Memento Mori again, I stopped at level seven.

Immunity from starvation.

You don't die no matter how much you starve?

Even if you deplete your body of nutrients?

Humans aren't machines of perpetual motion.

They aren't invincible either.

What if the Warrior drowned in the sea?

Would air magically appear in his brain?

It was quite hard to grasp how the power worked.

I put a 'keep thinking' post-it on the question I thought of and kept reading.

"Personality is... Necrophobia."

Fear of death.

"I was wondering for quite a while, but... Personalities don't really matter, does it?"

The saint shot a question back at me.

"Why do you think that?"

"Because of you, of course. You say you're opposed to violence,

and your personality is Ahimsa at that, and yet you always hit me.”

The saint rolled to look at me.

“It’s not violence, it’s an act of love.”

“For real?”

“I’m always honest. Each of my blows are filled with love.”

“...We’ll talk about that later. In any case, this just ends up making even less sense? A Warrior is afraid of death? How did he become one in the first place?”

Having necrophobia doesn’t make someone a coward, but it doesn’t mean something completely different either.

“How can one fight monsters if he’s afraid of death?”

She isn’t going to say that love and courage overcomes everything, is she?

“Mm... What you’re talking about makes sense, but...”

The saint sat up.

“Humans aren’t that simple, you know? If fearing death is your

fate, will you just live that way? No, you'll find a way to overcome it. That's what a human is, after all."

Does the saint not see me as a monster?

"I think because he didn't get too influenced by his personality and power, because he always stayed positive and motivated, he managed to get this far."

'Getting over one's personality'...

Would I perhaps be able to become a benevolent person in the future then?

That was a joke, of course.

"Of course, there are times when one gets overtaken by their personalities at times. This is especially the case for those who attained their powers. Mr. Smith just managed to take his immense willpower, love, and courage to overcome his fear of death."

Love and courage.

And here I almost thought it wouldn't appear again...

"He got over his fear, and if he doesn't die, I really don't know how to deal with him."

“Don’t give up. Powerful abilities come with high costs. This is an old saying passed down from the ancient times. Seeing how powerful [Memento Mori] is, the cost for it must be...”

The saint closed her mouth.

Cost...

Heart of Gold required money as its cost.

Memento Mori must demand something for the services it renders the user as well.

Either an advance payment, or a deferred payment.

Right. Let’s stop with the personality for now.

Time to move onto stats.

3200 for health.

He’d die after being stabbed by a sword about 320 times.

Of course, this would only be the case when his health regen and defense stats were all at zero.

“.....”

Again, I was faced with a question.

What was health points, according to the Oracle?

Humans die when their necks get cut off.

Real life didn't work like video games.

Was it based on one's tenacity to life?

Possible.

For example, if the saint lost all the blood in her body, and still had HP left, would she stay alive?

...No way.

Based on my experiences so far, HP only served to work as a warning.

It didn't work like HP bars from video games.

It just shows how hard it is to kill a living being.

Perhaps there can be situations where it would be possible to kill a being without making its HP go down at all?

I looked down and took a look at the Warrior's defense and magic resistance points.

"150 for defense and 100 for magic resistance..."

The saint chipped in after hearing my mutters.

"The Warrior didn't even get a scratch from a dragon's breath when he was wearing the Hiranrel. No matter what you do, Mr. Murderer, you shouldn't be able to injure the Warrior."

The saint seemed to think that I would fail.

I don't really know why though.

"...Hold on, I need to see a fairy."

When I tried to leave for a second, the saint grinned.

"Bathroom?"

"Smoke."

"Smoking can lead to lung can..."

“Shut up.”

I got out of the room and bit down on my e-cigarette.

How can I kill the Warrior? His defense points were unreasonably high, and his body was immune to death.

As I thought, the way to kill him would just come down to...

After thinking for about ten minutes, I went back into the room.

The saint was sitting next to a table at the far left side of the room.

Snack time again?

The tea she was drinking smelled quite strange.

Bitter?

Almost smelled like medicine, but...

“Can I have a cu...”

Before I could even finish, the teacup in her hand disappeared.

“Hahaha! This is really expensive, so it probably won’t suit your cheap mouth. Understand?”

This girl...

What was she hiding?

“Cheapskate.”

She probably won’t tell me anything if I tried to dig deeper...

Let’s just ignore her for now.

There are more important matters to work on.

I took a look at the Warrior’s abilities next.

Dragon Blood, Imagine Citadel, Zenith Crown.

[Dragon Blood] – Immunity from sword wounds. It’s a temporary ability that can be gained by bathing in a dragon’s blood. It can block a sword strike from a normal soldier, but any more than that would result in an injury.

It's said that the ability's strength dissipates with time, so this was more of a needless title for the Warrior at this point.

Next is...

[Imagine Citadel] – Magic that allows one to create a massive protective barrier in the name of god. The defensive capability of this barrier is as strong as the average castle's.

A miracle that the Warrior can perform once a day.

So it's possible to cast magic without mana if you're loved by god...

How convenient.

The last one, Zenith Crown, was a highest class of white magic that protected one from mental attacks.

If a person like the Warrior went under the influence of a mental attack, there would surely be a lot of trouble.

So he ended up getting protection against powerful mental attacks as well.

The biggest issue I'm going to be faced with is his power.

The second biggest issue would be his experience in battle.

He should've experienced pretty much every form of battle by now.

According to the report, it's said that he's very meticulous and alert...

The reason why a person like him would appear in a town out in the open is... overconfidence in his power, perhaps?

It was most likely that.

It should be hard to try to take advantage of that to kill him, though.

As someone who fears death, he should have several methods to take him out of critical situations.

I had to kill someone like that.

In battle, it is said that he uses spellstones to attain blessings, so the top priority for me would be to nullify his magic capabilities.

Well, since we already have a plan for this one, I shouldn't think too deeply about it...

The people in this world weren't stupid.

They approved the plans that were presented to them because they were certain that it would work.

Perhaps I wouldn't even have to appear in the battle...

After confirming all of his items as well, I tried looking into the Warrior's main weapon, the Sword Monster.

[Mouthless monster = Sword Monster] – Rank: A

– A pair of swords created from the Crimson Comet. Because the hilt and the blade are both one piece, it is impossible to break the hilt or try to separate it from the blade. The name “Sword Monster” was given by [Romeo Smith]. This sword is alive and continuously spews out curses and screams towards its user, causing the users to sometimes turn completely insane. It used to be a B+ ranked weapon, but turned into an A ranked weapon after slaying Mirage Belt.

– A black magic that can be applied to a monster. Any blood that is consumed by the user is sacrificed to god, and 10% of this blood can be returned in whatever blood type the user desires. It is possible to dope oneself in excess blood to gain physical enhancement.

– An extra ability given on top of The Crimson King. This sword attained a corruption element after slaying countless monsters in the world. Anything cut by this sword would attain a poison, rot, paralysis, sleep, burn, freeze, bleed, fatigue, slow, curse, etc. side effects from it.

– Attained after slaying [Mirage Belt]. Any time the sword is swung, the world becomes slightly injured, causing the mana in the area to begin boiling. Most magic spells, therefor, can be dispelled just by a swing of the sword.

How disgusting.

You might as well just have written down ‘It’s a cheat’ as the description.

“Sword Monster... He uses two...?”

“Surprised? It might seem amazing to you, but it really isn’t much of a weapon, at least to me and Necro. It’s just described fancily.”

I asked a question at her.

“...Not a good weapon?”

“Sword Monster really is just suited for defense. It’s just sturdy.”

I could kind of understand.

The saint was quite overpowered as well.

She was the strongest white wizard in the world.

To her, Sword Monster was just a sturdy weapon.

“How strong would a weapon with high attack points be then?”

“Well...”

After thinking for a bit, the saint brightened.

“It should be able to destroy a star in one hit?”

“.....”

Star destroyer?

That’s a thing?

It was way more powerful than what I had imagined.

“You’re joking, right?”

The scale was a little too big to grasp.

“It might be hard for you to grasp it, but it’s true. The weapon I just described is the strongest weapon in this world... Of course, there might be stronger weapons than [Another Fact] that haven’t been revealed to us yet, but for now, this is the strongest one we have in public record.”

Another Fact.

An artifact from a different world.

“Could that be the hero’s sword...?”

The saint nodded vigorously.

“Correct~!”

...Perhaps now’s a good time to pack up.

Chapter 22. Can't Save Everyone

“Why’d you buy so many things? Was it possible to get things delivered inside the train as well? How strange~”

Necro, who had just come back from work with an exhausted face, began to rummage through the delivery boxes.

“Protein pack, latex gloves, raincoat, rubber boots, umbrellas... What the hell? Are you on a crazy shopping spree or what? I’m not gonna count this towards traveling expenses, you know?”

The saint, who hid her own delivery box under her seat, stiffened up.

This kid, was she seriously trying to pass this off as travel expense?

...Maybe I can do it as well?

“Can you actually count this off as traveling expenses? I bought this with my own money.”

Necro shouted at me in anger.

“You think we’re on a picnic?! Hell no. Hey! What did you order? Give it, give it. Damn, it’s been awhile since I felt myself get angry

like this.”

Necro quickly snatched away the box in the saint’s hands.

“What’s this? Manicure? Lipstick? You two idiots really get along well, don’t you? Don’t even think about getting your grubby hands on our budget, ok?”

The saint rubbed her two hands together like a fly towards Necro.

“I told you, this isn’t a picnic? Get your shit together. You think I’m your mom or something? Do I really have to check on you for everything? There is a war going on here you know.”

Necro clicked his tongue and threw the delivery box at the saint.

“I’m gonna forgive you just this once, alright?”

“Understood!”

The saint dug through her box while making a strange “kikikiki” sound.

Feels like she’s getting less and less human the more I get to know her.

“Oh, that idiot.”

Necro thudded down on the chair opposite to me.

“Who in the world would take her like this? Hey, Jin, you want her? I’ll give you a discount.”

“Do you take refunds?”

The saint threw the delivery box at us.

“Hey! Stop it, stop it. Are you a god of violence or what?”

Necro frowned as he blocked a sock to his face.

“That smell! Holy crap! What? Hey? Where are you going?”

“Secret!”

Probably going to apply some makeup.

The saint passed both of us and headed straight for the bathroom.

Having both of us sit in the room like this was quite awkward.

There wasn't much to talk about, after all.

Necro realized this as well, and leaned back a little.

“What was that thing you ordered earlier?”

“Protein?”

“That and the other things. It's not for me and Morto, is it? It's not like you're going to need protein anyway. Planning on testing something?”

Sharp question.

“Don't worry about it. I might not even end up needing it.”

“I don't get it. Are you planning on killing the Warrior with those? I'm telling you this now, but allergies or poison won't work on him?”

“I know. You can't kill him.”

We looked at each other in the eye and fell into deep thought.

We were both experts when it came to death.

I had knowledge on how to kill people, and Necro was a scholar

of death itself.

On expertise, Necro was probably more advanced than I was.

He probably tried to find ways to defeat Memento Mori.

And he failed.

I didn't make light of this fact.

“Well, that's that.”

Necro was the first one to end the silence.

“Looks like we're almost here. Get ready.”

I thought I smelled something close to cow dung. Now that I looked at it, I could begin to see farms lined up outside.

There were hills filled with green grass with numerous cows dotted across them.

At the horizon, I could see giant mountains and majestic cliffs.

I modified the position of my eyes to look at the mountains.

A volcano with a height of 5,150m, Volcorre.

At this height, one should be able to see some snow lined up at the top, but I could only see tiny bits of white among all the brown.

Near the crater, the air was shimmering from all the heat.

Inside, crimson-black lava was writhing inside like a living being.

The Warrior probably wouldn't die from this.

[This station is Boiser, Boiser station. For those of you wishing to visit Volez, please get off here. Please make sure you don't leave anything behind as you get off. For elders and those with higher blood pressure, please be careful of the extreme change in temperature. This station is Boiser, Boiser station.] Kii-

The train began to steadily slow down.

“Hot!”

The saint fanned her face with her hands as soon as she got off.

She said she was fixing her makeup, but nothing really changed.

The color of her lips changed a little, maybe?

She changed into a one-piece dress during the trip.

She really looks like a kid like this.

She's supposed to be a high schooler, but she looks more like a middle school student.

Her height is short to begin with, but her other aspects are...

“Ora!”

I got kicked.

“...Why?”

“I felt something dangerous from you.”

I rubbed my butt.

“Can you stop hitting my butt already? Just hit somewhere else.”

Unhealthy to be hit in only one place all the time.

The saint narrowed her eyes.

“Please don’t say anything that can result in misunderstandings.”

How would this create misunderstandings?

“Wow, it’s hot.”

Necro almost tore off the necktie off of himself.

“It feels like it gets hotter every time I come here. Should I have bought something cool for myself?”

Should be hotter in Volez.

Thank god I can’t feel any temperatures with this body.

Necro pointed at the waiting room nearby.

“Let’s rest there for a bit. We can move after we get permission. The commanders should sort out all the soldiers for us.”

“Permission?”

Necro sent me a telepathy to answer my question.

[They installed a bomb on the bridge. They’ll blow it up after we

pass.] “Ah.”

Volez was a plot of land right below a volcano.

The town that surrounded the volcano like a donut was quite an interesting sight.

The problem was, the land around the town uplifted and subsided several times, creating a cliff around the town.

Thanks to this, the town became an island.

To reach the island, one needed to go halfway down a cliff, then take a bridge to town.

The first phase of this plan was to keep the Warrior tied down within the town.

This was a pretty good place for us in that regard.

I followed the saint into the waiting room, and looked over the people inside.

There were quite a lot of people.

No one seemed suspicious though.

“Won’t we get found out like this?”

“What?”

I sent Necro a telepathy.

[Volez is being controlled by the military right now.] [Yeah?] [Towns nearby must make trade deals with Volez. Wouldn’t it be pretty weird if Volez just stopped communicating all of a sudden? For example, there must be a restaurant of sorts inside the town. If ingredients for the day don’t arrive...] [Ah! I had been wondering what you were curious about. You’re really looking down on the power of a nation. But... Good question. I thought you would just skim over it. How sharp.] Necro clapped lightly.

[It’s not in the report, is it? There’s no choice really. These guys are unofficial. Can’t have any records of them. Forbidden by international law to have these guys around as well. In any case, there’s a branch in the government that handles this kind of stuff.] An information department?

[This would call for... Protocol number three. So a tiny bit of brainwashing is involved.] A government that effectively makes use of wizards and ability users...

I assumed they would be quite powerful, but not to this degree.

[I suppose rebellions would be nigh impossible with a group like this.] [...You think?] What does he mean?

Before I could ask Necro the question, though, I had to turn to see someone staring this way.

To be more specific, someone staring at the saint.

“Eh? Dear, look. That... Isn’t that the bitch?”

An old woman frowned as an old man pointed at the saint.

“Where? I can’t really see... Ah! You’re right! That little bitch! That bitch who killed my son!”

Everyone in the room looked this way in an instant.

Mutters began to rise from the crowd. I could make out words like ‘bitch’ and ‘traitor’ from the crowd.

“Ah... I should’ve used magic...”

Necro facepalmed in annoyance.

“What did you come here for this time?!”

The old man stomped his way over to the saint and swung his cane at her.

It shouldn't hurt much for her, but...

“It's dangerous.”

I blocked the cane and looked at the saint's face.

Her usual bright demeanor was completely gone, and her eyes were devoid of any light.

She was like a corpse.

“Let go! Let go, you bastard! Let go already!”

The old man did all he could to try and get the cane out, but it refused to budge from my hands.

Only after the old man decided to back off, did I decide to let go.

Clang.

When the cane dropped on the ground, the saint flinched.

She had been looking at the floor like a criminal since a while back.

“It's the saint...”

“It really is her.”

The mutters were getting louder now.

“Piece of shit.”

“Hate her.”

“Because of her, my son was...!”

When a middle-aged woman shouted in anger, the rest of the crowd went up in an uproar.

“That witch made the war last longer!” “I won’t forgive her!” “Why couldn’t you save my son?” “Whore!” “The soldier you saved killed my child!” “Go back to the whorehouse you came from!” “Bitch!”

There was only anger and hate in the area now.

The crowd glared at the saint.

Anger infected the crowd like a plague and frowns began to spread.

It almost felt like they wanted to rip her to pieces the first chance

they got.

The only thing keeping them from actually doing that was me and Necro.

I walked towards the saint.

“How annoying.”

The saint gripped her clothing tightly.

She probably saved just about everyone she came across, be it ally or enemy.

Because she couldn't dare see someone die in front of her.

In the middle of the battlefield-

The saint heals a wounded soldier. By sacrificing her body. By taking on the pain for the soldier.

The soldier would thank the saint, and go out to kill the enemy.

She couldn't stand by just watching that happen.

She couldn't bear to see someone die, even if that person was an enemy.

The miracles the saint performed for someone was ultimately a misfortune for another man.

In the situation where someone must die, the only thing the saint did was to extend the time of the war.

In the end, no one was saved.

Not even her.

The anger of the people that had lost its target got directed at her.

Look. This is the result of your actions. People aren't worth saving.

Clack.

An apple rolled on the floor.

It was aimed at the saint, but it ended up hitting my back instead.

Instead of turning back myself, I modified my eye to look into the crowd.

One of the children clicked his tongue in disappointment.

Thump.

This time, a bag hit my hips.

“Bring back my son...”

The woman’s hands were shaking. Rather than fear, she was filled with anger.

Tears were welling up in the woman’s eyes.

The people’s faces stiffened once they saw this and began to throw various objects our way.

“Disappear from our town.”

“Go to hell!”

“You in front of the saint, move!”

All sorts of things began to beat my head and my back.

I wasn’t really planning on being a meat shield, but...

I suppose it can’t really be helped, considering my position right

now. It doesn't hurt that much anyway.

“Ehei! Stop it!”

Necro tried to stop the people, but they didn't show any signs of stopping.

“If you keep doing this...!”

Someone began to throw sharp objects like pens and knives, which began to stick into my back.

Shatter!

The people stopped when glass shattered on the floor.

Perhaps Necro's threats worked a little bit.

Is it over?

I turned back with a sigh to look at the people.

...They were all worthless.

I almost lost self-control, which caused the crowd to tremble a little bit.

One of the teens who tried to throw something stiffened.

“Damn, didn’t you hear what I said?”

Necro stepped out before me.

His body was writhed in black smoke.

It was easy to tell that this was corrupt mana just by the looks of it.

They could probably tell as well around now. That they’d die if they kept this up.

Chaos ensued.

People ran out of the room like frenzied rabbits.

Necro really is quite helpful at times.

I looked at the saint, who seemed to be close to fainting, and flicked her in the face.

Flick!

Her head bent back with a loud snap.

“What are you doing!?”

The saint frowned as she rubbed her wound.

So she came back.

I blew away the blue flame on my finger.

“...Well, I don't think I'd get a chance to take my revenge later.”

I flinched a little when the saint raised her hand. Was she going to hit me again?

Hm? Why wasn't she hitting me?

The saint brushed off the glass shards on her head quietly.

She seemed like she was ready to cry, which made me quite confused.

Chapter 23. The Empty Two

“That branch really is a shithole, isn’t it? Can’t they properly modify information?”

Necro was shouting at someone the whole time while he was crossing the bridge.

“Bring everyone in the waiting room to me, now! Those bastards...!”

It seemed that he was using telepathy to talk to someone at the moment.

“What? Impossible? Did you just mention the word ‘impossible’? If I tell you to do something, you do it! You want me to remind you of the olden days again? Huh? Do it!”

Necro shouted extremely loudly by the end, and made a gesture of him throwing a phone somewhere in anger. He probably voiced his conversations on purpose for the saint to hear.

“Stop. We’ll have to confirm your identities here.”

Soldiers began to approach us from the other side when we crossed the bridge. They had checked our identities twice already. How meticulous. After finishing the identification process, the soldier returned the identity card to Necro and saluted.

“Thank you for your cooperation. Your shelter is located in sector B, building one. Here’s a map.”

Everything seems to have been taken care of already. Soldiers were roaming around the town in casual clothes. They had to be like this so that the Warrior wouldn’t get suspicious about what was going on. Like this, it should be hard to tell that the town’s been occupied by soldiers. I had heard that the first company came here in advance to set up walls and barriers. They did quite a nice job. After all, they had experienced war in their life already. I could see how much the government cared about this operation just by seeing the quality of the soldiers here. Necro began to walk forward confidently. It was pretty dark outside even with lamps, which made it a little hard to see. I can see quite a lot of stars in the sky.

“It’s 9 already?”

Necro looked down to his wristwatch under the lamp.

“I was thinking of looking around a little bit, but... I suppose we’ll have to do that tomorrow. We need to get dinner as well. Let’s go to the shelter then.”

The saint raised her hand in happiness.

“Food! Yay!”

The two of them are unnecessarily happy.

“I don’t need food though.”

To be more exact, I can’t eat. Necro grinned.

“I know. You can just watch.”

Damn it. I headed to the shelter following Necro. After walking for about ten minutes, I could see a three-floored building. Orange light and muffled noises came out of the open door of the building. Candles, was it? When we walked in, the soldiers inside all turned to look at us. Pretty much all of them seemed to have tattoos on them along with scars. They scanned us for a second then turned back to go back to their usual business.

“Ah! A cat!”

The saint ran forward disregarding everything in her way.

“Can we sit here? Please?”

The saint looked over the tired cat on the table then lifted it gently with her hands.

Just bite it, why don’t you?

“Yay~”

The cat’s body flopped powerlessly in the air. Soon enough, though, it began to fumble around, trying to get away from the saint’s grasp. The saint rubbed her face on the cat’s belly and let it back down. The cat disappeared into the kitchen.

A little while later.

Chomp chomp. Clack clack! Gulp gulp.

Everyone in the inn was looking towards the one person who was eating a mountain of food on her table.

“.....”

She’s eating quite well with that small body of hers. Was her stomach linked with a different dimension? How was she eating so well? Was this the power of the Devourer Ring? I tried looking under the table, but her stomach didn’t seem to have changed in size at all. Will she be fine like that? This world’s bathrooms were old and didn’t have a proper flush. It didn’t matter for me, since I didn’t have to use the bathroom, but for the innkeeper, things might get a little annoying for him. After all, the bathroom might explode in his face. A lot of people were looking this way with worried faces already... Perhaps, for the sake of world peace, the saint needs to stop eating?

“Mr. Murderer, were you thinking of something very

inappropriate about now?”

The saint growled while she pointed her fork towards me. She seemed like a beast, almost.

“No, no.”

I observed the saint while I denied her speculation. Her fork was moving so fast that it was beginning to leave afterimages. Necro, who had finished his meal already, nodded to himself.

“Germany really has the best sausages.”

I chipped in.

“One might say Germans just like sausages a bit too much.”

The saint licked the sausage on her fork after hearing this. The soldiers gulped when they saw her doing this.

Chomp.

The saint bit into the sausage. Little moans began to come from the crowd. The saint chewed the meat in her mouth and looked around with the eyes of a beast. Only then did the people look the other way. I, too, looked down to read the report on the Warrior.

He's a defensive type, huh...

It feels like people were staring at me, but let's ignore that for now.

[His attack power is not to be taken lightly, but the man himself prefers defense over everything else. 'Warriors are supposed to protect his comrades. It would be good if I could have saved everyone with these hands of mine.' – Romeo Smith] The warrior's style was to stand his ground as much as possible. At least, this was the case for beings other than human-like creatures. I wonder how he'll fight humans? Maybe he'll rush in with a shield in hand...? That in itself was quite scary considering the Warrior's actual stats.

“What a workaholic you are.”

The saint sent a comment towards me while eating.

“Yeah, why don't you go out on a walk or something? Ah... That was good.”

I looked up when Necro spoke. The table was already completely clear of food. That must've been like at least twenty servings of food...

I lowered my report and responded to the two.

“Time is money.”

The saint looked at me silently.

“Anything you’d like to say?”

“...No, it’s nothing. It’s just... I was surprised at how human you are.”

The saint was the first to ever say anything like that.

“Yeah?”

I went back to reading the report after saying that. We should arrive in two days. Necro and the saint should be setting up the barrier some time tomorrow. The Warrior arrives in four days. There might be small errors, but it should be generally accurate.

“Necro.”

“Mm? What?”

“Is there a reason why we’re handling the Warrior first? I don’t see a particular reason for choosing the Warrior instead of the Thief, the Summoner, the Fighter, or the Hero. Shouldn’t we be going for the thief if we consider distance?”

“Ah, that?”

Necro responded casually, but his face had changed slightly.

“I don’t know. Maybe because he seemed so easy? It’s simple, you know. He’s a Warrior, so he must be dumb.”

“Would the government really rank it like that?”

“They must’ve ranked in order of difficulty~ Ah! Whatever! Don’t ask. I don’t want to think about it. Why’s it so hot?”

Necro stood up and loosened his belt a little.

“I’m going to go sleep. What are you guys going to do? Morto and I should sleep early for the barrier we’re setting up tomorrow.”

The saint put down the wine glass on the table.

“Noo! I don’t want to!”

“You think I want to do it? We have to create a big’un, so get ready.”

The saint plopped down on the table.

“I guess this is the end for today... Ah! Mr. Murderer, your room number is 202. Mine is...”

“Not interested.”

“Next to yours. Please take care not to get too excited.”

“I won’t.”

Who would?

“It’s a joke.”

The saint stood up, so I cleaned up and got ready to leave as well.

“Right, sleep well then. Ah, Jin, you don’t sleep, right? You might as well come to my room if you feel lonely.”

Necro’s starting to throw jokes my way as well huh.

“Don’t want to.”

“If you decide to come, knock on my door three times.”

I looked at the saint straight in the eye, and clearly told her my feelings.

“I. Don’t. Want. To.”

My eyes would fall out if I had to look at them for another second. I swore that someday I would punch them in the face at some point in my life, and stumbled into my room.

Chapter 24. The Saint's Repayment

I wish I can get a cold beer... It's quite boring living as a corpse. I can't feel anything, which made it feel like I was in a permanent dream. I sat down on my chair and took out a book from the vault. Now, time for some read...

“Snore...”

Is Necro snoring already? He falls asleep quick... I punched the wall facing his room several times, closed my book, and went outside. The first floor was quite loud as well, so I guess I'm forced to go to the stables.

“This is nice.”

Excluding the occasional sound of the horses, it was actually pretty quiet here. I could see the moon up above as well, through the hole in the ceiling. I checked the haystack for any horse dung, and lay down on it. Now, I'll go back to my reading session...

“Ah! Found you! So you were here after all.”

The saint approached me with a smile on her face.

“I found you. I thought you escaped again and got scared, you know?”

“Necro snores too loudly.”

“Aha.”

I stood back up.

“What do you need?”

“Mm... Well...”

The saint seemed to think of something for a second, then brightened up the moment she thought of something.

“Pop quiz! Annyeong, hak! Sei, nyo! Oo?”

“.....”

What was this idiot going on about?

“What quiz?”

“Annyeong, hak! Sei, nyo! Oo?”

The words that I heard, and the meanings that I understood from it, were completely different. This must be thanks to Xenoglossy. Annyeong meant hi in Korean. Hak must be a part of the work wisaeng-hak, meaning hygiene. Sei meant holy? Ah, must be せい

(聖). Nyo is 女(にょ), so sei and nyo together would mean saint. In other words.

<Hello, Jin. Saint, OO?>

She thought of quite an interesting wordplay.

“Hello.”

(Hell, Lo (to))

The saint made a disappointed face when I told her the translation.

“That last part is supposed to be hai, isn’t it? Because there are two circles.”

She must’ve wanted to hear me say her name. All the more reason not to say it.

“Let’s try again. はい(hi), hi(hello), 海(sea)’s high hai(shark)!”

They were all pronounced as ‘hai’.

“You mean hai(害, harmful)...”

“Just say my name already! Morto hai! It’s simple! Might as well

read it as Motto high (very high)!”

I didn’t see the worth in saying her name.

“It’s a fake name though.”

“It’s a name given by god.”

Necro was talking about that. Because wizards couldn’t reveal their true name, they needed to use names that god gave them.

“And your real name?”

“Why don’t you try guessing?”

“Heisenberg?”

“Wrong~”

If it’s a German name...

“Hailey? Hilda? Heidi?”

“9! 9!! 9!!!”

Wordplay on nein(no)...

“Whatever. What did you really come here for anyway? To watch me? I’m not going to run you know.”

“I came here to heal you. You got an injury on your back didn’t you?”

She seemed to be talking about the injuries I got from the waiting room.

“It’s fine. It’s not anything big. Plus, I don’t get favors from cultists.”

The saint seemed confused.

“Um... Did you just call me a cultist?”

“Don’t try to deny it. It even said it in the books? ‘Healing magic can be cast by anyone once they form a contract with god, but in order to use it well, one must acquire proper medical knowledge.’”

This was because one could only heal after recognizing the problem in the injury. There were tens of thousands of spells under a single category of healing magic. Injuries don’t get healed just by muttering some spells. Life was more complicated than that.

“I can’t let someone who isn’t even a doctor to handle my body.

Go away, fake.”

I looked at the saint suspiciously on purpose. While pointing to a certain sentence in a book highlighted in red.

[There are lucky cases where a patient does get healed, but more often than not the patient would die because of a wrong usage of healing magic. Always be careful of unlicensed healers.] My life is on stake. I have to be careful. Well, I was already dead, but still.

“Ah, I was wondering about what you were worried about.”

The saint walked over to me with a smile on her face.

“Just get over here already. I’m going to jump you if you don’t? Do you really want there to be violence involved?”

I didn’t think I’d be sentenced to death even in a different world.

“Come at me, psycho.”

I raised my two hands like a bear and began to walk around the saint threateningly.

“I couldn’t get my license because I came from a different world, but I managed to get a proper education as a medical student in college. Isn’t that enough?”

“Liar. You said you were a high schooler.”

“Early admissions.”

“So you aren’t even a high schooler then. Liar.”

The saint stepped back with a “kuh”. I sent out the final blow.

“A wizard who isn’t even a doctor trying to heal people by praying or something? Must be quite a sight. Do you need to sacrifice a pig’s head or something?”

“I’ve never seen an idiot who talks about stuff like that other than you, Mr. Murderer.”

“The one who says ‘yes’ to a person who offers to heal with magic with the idiot here. You can get scammed quite easily.”

“You believe in the existence of magic, but you don’t trust in my healing magic itself?”

“I have trust issues.”

“Just get healed already.”

Tap.

The saint disappeared from view. Physical enhancement? I tried to run immediately, but got tackled from behind.

“Stay down. It’ll just take a second.”

The saint whispered this into my ear while she held me down.

“It’ll only hurt the first time. Don’t worry, I’ll be nice.”

Uaaah!

The saint whose body had been enhanced by magic wasn’t something that could be beaten by human means. In the end, I gave up and decided to lay down on the floor.

“Do what you want.”

I had pulled out the knives in my back, but didn’t seal it up yet. She must be trying to fix that up now.

“I’ll start now?”

The saint began to mutter her spell whilst she sat on my back. I could hear a pleasant whisper in my ear while my back began to warm up. I was sweating quite a bit from the heat.

How light.

I used my eyes to take a look at the saint. She was whispering a few words under her breath with her eyes closed. She must be praying about now. ASMR white magic... It isn't too bad, I suppose.

I modified my view a little bit again.

I could see white mana flowing out of the saint's body. I became mesmerized by the sight for a slight second, then returned to my senses after hearing something.

Shf. Shfshf.

“...What are you doing?”

Shf.

The saint was drawing something on my arm after she had finished using healing magic. I thought she was drawing a magic circle at first, but she was just doodling.

“This left arm has a black dragon sealed insi...”

“You!”

I tore off the leech off of my back. The saint blew back onto the haystack.

“You can draw on your sketchbook.”

“Ever heard of charms?”

“Never saw or heard of a charm that resembled anything like this.”

I waved the saint away like I was waving away a fly.

“Now, now. Just leave already. I’m thankful for healing me, but it’s time for children to sleep now. It’d be troublesome if you got shorter than you already are from a lack of sleep. After all, I’d have to use a microscope to see you if you get smaller than you are already.”

The saint didn’t budge.

“I refuse.”

“Damn it!”

The girl just refused to move from her spot. I tried to move her by hand, but my hand ended up hurting because of the holy flame. I gave up and decided to ignore her and read. The saint approached me when she saw this.

“Studying magic again? You can’t even use mana though.”

“I have to keep learning if I want to keep winning. I might not be able to use it, but it’s not worthless information.”

“...Why did someone like you end up killing?”

The saint quickly closed her mouth, thinking that she said something she shouldn’t have said.

A person like me...

I would love it if there were more people like me. Even now, I’ve done everything I could just to blend into society. I’ve told people only the simplest side to my thoughts and explained everything about what I thought to people that I’ve met. If there were two of me, I would exchange thousands of words with myself to transmit information between each other.

“What? Did you think I was just a complete psychopath?”

“Well... Yes.”

How honest.

“I’m a normal person.”

That was a lie.

“I couldn’t help but murder.”

“Liar.”

She seemed quite confident in her denial.

“I’ve actually investigated you quite a bit in my free time.”

When?

She shouldn’t have had a lot of time. I was with her most of the time after I’ve revealed my abilities to her, after all.

...Other than that one time when she had to go see the fairy.

The saint sat down.

“You might’ve not known, but I know a person who is able to ‘attain information just through key words’. I asked him about you, and learned quite a bit as a result.”

A search engine...

Seems likely that it would exist. If one could search for products, I suppose there would be a power that could search for information as well.

“What did you learn?”

“About Whitehead. Where you were born.”

“I told you everything I know. What about it?”

“What happened there? How did you turn into a murderer? Surely you could’ve done something else.”

The saint seemed a little regretful as she said this, but I couldn’t agree with her at all. A different path? Could a human that was fascinated by killing creatures end up being anything other than a murderer?

Instead of answering the saint’s question, I quietly began to reminisce about my past.

Chapter 25. The Space Being Looks Into The Stars

Noise began to permeate through my synesthete body. My heightened senses began to pick up on information much farther than the average person's hearing range.

This is...

The first thing that became ingrained into my eyes when I was born was a white ceiling, along with a single line engraved on it.

[WHITEHEAD ALWAYS FOUND ANSWERS] I could easily understand what it meant, thanks to the linguistic knowledge I had inherited from my parents. Using the knowledge in my head, I hypothesized the reason for my creation. I was probably a prototype of a new human that was to replace the current humanity. A designed race of humans.

For now...

The cables on my body, as well as the metal restraints on my limbs, were quite annoying. Wasn't this too cruel a treatment for a baby who couldn't even walk? I modified my nerves to tune out the unnecessary noise around me, and stimulated my cells to grow faster. I should be able to walk in three hours. By then, I should be able to tear myself out of my restraints as well.

I detected a vibration below me and looked down. I could see a mirror underneath me. A person could look in from the outside, but I couldn't look outside. I was able to detect electromagnetic signals on the other side though.

“So that's our test subject?”

A man in a white lab coat was looking down at me coldly. I couldn't exactly hear what he was talking about, but I could guess from the shapes of his lips.

“I heard you tried putting in asian DNA in the pool this time?”

“...You're going a little too far with the joke.”

The woman, like the man, had white hair.

“You've mixed A13 and E38's DNA to create this subject this time. It's pretty much guaranteed to be a failure like this.”

“The expected stats for this one's quite high, though.”

“I had heard that this combination of DNA might have negative effects on the test subject's personality. Perhaps this would create negative effects for the humanity of the future...”

The two quickly disappeared out of my sight as they talked amongst themselves. A while later, a different woman holding an

e-cigarette appeared. She, too, was wearing a white lab coat, but unlike the two from before, didn't seem to belong to this place at all. She was wearing high heels and a purple skirt. Her white shirt seemed to be about to explode thanks to those breasts of hers.

“So you're growing already. You should understand what I'm saying then, right? If you try anything weird, I'll fry your brain. You've been warned.”

The woman looked at me coldly as she said this. When she manipulated the hologram in the air using her fingers, the cables on my arms were taken off. The restraints on my limbs were taken off as well. When I sat up, the woman handed me a tiny ball.

“Wear this.”

It was a white sphere. It was quite a strange object with a button in the middle.

So I just need to press this?

When I pressed the button, the object exploded into a bunch of white strings that enveloped my body. The strings contracted on my body into the shape of a space suit in an instant. When I raised my feet into the air, the strings wrapped around them to form shoes.

“Fits perfectly. Physical age seems to be about five years old. The fact that you're able to tamper with your body right after birth

itself is quite satisfactory.”

The woman walked down a hallway while saying this. I considered what I was to do for a second, then decided to simply follow. The threat from her at the beginning wasn't a lie after all.

“Ah, I forgot to tell you. I'm your biological mother. But don't even think about calling me that.”

I couldn't see her face as she was saying this.

“What shall I call you, then?”

“Multibrain. That's what the others call me.”

Multibrain...

A door in front of us opened to reveal another path. It seemed to be blocked off by a wall, though.

“And I am?”

“Test subject.”

I stopped in my tracks. Multibrain noticed this and turned around.

“Individual names are meaningless.”

The wall opened up. When I walked in, my feet began to be lifted up into the air.

Gravity control...

Multibrain leapt up to the top of the vertical path in one step. I followed her actions upwards. After a bit more walking, we arrived in a room containing a device that resembled an MRI. Multibrain sat me inside.

“Stop it with the accelerated growth. There might be calculation errors otherwise.”

I was thinking of doing that anyway. My body was running low on energy. A green light scanned my skinny body with a humming noise. I decided to ask Multibrain a question.

“Why does this body not have a heart?”

“Heart?”

Multibrain clicked her tongue at that.

“‘This body’ and not even ‘I’? A child like you shouldn’t be saying stuff like that. Think of the other person while talking. Ask the question again. Put a smile on your face this time.”

“You told me not to do anything like that.”

“Don’t go assuming things on your own. I only have one kind of feeling for you anyway.”

“What’s that?”

“Expectations.”

“.....”

“If I were to answer your question, it’s because you have a unique venous system that can pulsate by itself. Almost like a *branchiostoma belcheri*. ...Come down, now. I need to take your blood.”

After finishing the blood test, Multibrain used the ergometer to measure my strength, and took an intelligence test and an emotion test.

“Everything’s within the expectations... There’s a bit of a problem with your personality, but that can be fixed. Intelligence is...”

She threw away the hologram in front of her.

“Machine’s no good for measuring it. Haven’t seen one that

couldn't be measured in a long while.”

When she modified the panel in front of her a few times, a table appeared in front of me.

“You should have the rules for go stored in your head already. Begin.”

The timer started the moment she finished speaking. Black goes first. I glanced at Multibrain once, and made my move.

The result of the one hour thirty minute battle was my loss, by one point. Multibrain complimented me for my efforts.

“You did well for your first time. This is pretty good, especially against a quantum computer.”

“One more...”

“No. You just thought that it was ‘obvious’ for you to lose, didn’t you?”

Her words were cold. It almost seemed like her glare was about to pierce into me.

“Never, never think that you’d get a second chance. You lose once, you can never win. Can you live again after you die? No. You can’t.”

“.....”

The table disappeared. The Multibrain approached me, examined my face for a second, then clicked her tongue.

“I thought you’d feel ‘disappointment’ if I inserted the word ‘expectations’ into you. It seems you can’t feel anything, though. That makes you a failure as a living organism.”

As she said, I didn’t feel anything from this loss.

“You might go extinct from the fight for survival at this rate...”

I must’ve imagined a little tone of worry in her voice. In any case, this was the end to Multibrain’s tests. After this, multiple lab assistants appeared to perform more tests on me. Most of them were simulations. For a solid year, these people made me get experience through VR simulations. They were doing it to fill in my weak points, I assume. The assistants put me through war, surgery, company, weapon, and exercise simulations to get experience.

It was almost as if they were trying to create the perfect human. But in the end, what was ultimately created was a defective product that only killed for profit.

I stopped thinking about the past, and answered the saint with a smile.

“I hope I could turn out to be a good person in the future. But isn’t it too late? For the both of us, at least.”

Those who have stepped into a pool of blood will leave a trail of blood even when they decide to walk on a white path. It didn’t really change anything if you tried to back out of your path after you went so far on it. Before the saint could say anything else, I tried to change the topic.

“Ah, speaking of. I created a plan to take down the Warrior in the case that the first and the second strike force fails in taking him down. Want to hear?”

“For now...”

The saint didn’t seem very happy when she heard that I had a plan. As I thought, she doesn’t want to see him die. I explained my plan in simpler terms so that the saint could understand it.

“Hmm...”

After thinking a little bit to herself, the saint shook her head.

“Too big of a risk. What will you do if it fails?”

“I’ll act like a dog and be your slave forever.”

The saint began to think again thanks to my revolutionary incentive.

“Do you... Do you really think your plan would work?”

“If the Warrior does indeed turn out to be a hero, then yes. It’s not like I can guarantee a plan would work. After all, I can’t see into the future. Most things aren’t certain until you try it out. What, is there a reason why you’re hesitating?”

“Well... I don’t know. I still don’t know if I’m doing something right...”

This was something I was curious about as well. If I were to describe the saint in one sentence, it was that she was ‘too kind of a person’. She was someone who was willing to take on any danger to save everyone. Someone like this was trying to kill the heroes who saved this world. In this way, she was going completely against her ideology of life.

This all originates from the fact that ‘it’s impossible to save everyone’. If the hero starts a war, many people will die, regardless of the outcome. Would it be fine for the saint if citizens begin to die in this war under the name of ‘justice’? Of course not. In that case, it would be better to help the side that would result in the least deaths. The reason why the saint was making such a big decision was because she failed to persuade the hero. I decided to tell her my solution to her situation.

“Don’t worry about it too much. Humans are beings that pursue

profit from the beginning, anyways. The correct answer is always one that gives you the most profit in the end.”

This is probably why my personality was listed as pure egoism.

“Now, let me ask you something. Do you like a world filled with evil people, or one filled with saintly ones?”

“Of course, it would be...”

“The latter. Now, what answer would you get if you asked this question to an evil person? Would he choose a world where he might get backstabbed at any moment?”

I was confident.

“No, the reason why the world is so full of evil is precisely because it’s more profitable to steal a piece of bread in front of you rather than to wait for happiness that might or might not come. The reason why people commit crimes is because it brings profit.”

“Are you telling me that everyone sins? For profit?”

“Precisely. Humans all act for their profit. Good and evil are just modifiers people stick to certain actions afterwards. If you always think of helping the most amount of people at once, there’s no way you’d become unstable like this.”

Why do people have to be good? It was so much easier to profit if they chose to do evil things. Back in my childhood, those who worked for Whitehead all answered this question with these answers.

“Who knows? Maybe because you’d go to hell?”

“Because of the law. You’d be jailed if you committed crimes.”

“Because the majority of the people in the world are good.”

If there was no hell, if there was no law, and if the good were the minority, would it be right to commit evil? I brought the question to Multibrain in the end. The woman, who was vaping with her e-cigarette, looked down at me coldly.

“That’s a question with no answer. Find an answer on your own. Pick out the answer you like after you find several on your quest.”

I did what she told me. I analyzed data of acts that people praised and acts that people frowned upon. Using this, I concluded that the acts that sought short-term profits to be evil, and acts that sought long-term benefits to be good. Because I was the most precious thing in the world for me, I had thought that being evil or good was just a choice. Of course, I regret thinking that way later on in life.

The saint listened to my story quietly for a bit, then retreated to her room after saying that she needed to think for a bit. The stable

was quiet again now. I lay down on the haystack, and looked up into the stars.

Perhaps a human like me shouldn't have existed in this world.

Chapter 26. Faustian Impulse

The sky began to turn orange in color, and a rooster began to cry somewhere far away. It was already five. I lay down in the haystack as I carefully thought about why I couldn't collect mana. A living human was composed of something known as the soul. This soul was something that stayed within the blood of human beings, and was separated from it later on upon death.

If I were to explain it in modern terms by breaking down the word "soul" into "psyche" and "spirit"... The psyche would be the LAN cable that connected one to the world. On the other hand, the spirit would be a notebook composed of mainly three things.

Those three things would be the animus, akasha, and the ether. The animus would be the CPU and the OS. The akasha would be the database, with the ether acting as the power generator, or the battery.

My problem lay in the fact that the generator aspect of the ether was broken.

'But since the battery aspect of the ether is perfectly fine, couldn't I use magic through the help of potions?'

This was what I had thought in the past, but it turned out to be a misunderstanding on my part. Magic was essentially a technique that made use of mana's ability to efficiently transform into any kind of energy. If it wasn't possible for me to refine the resource known as mana, it was a given that I wouldn't be able to use magic.

Just like how a fueled car with a broken engine couldn't move.

In the end, the only choice was to fix that broken part or...

“Guten morgen!”

The saint appeared with a grin on her face. I suppose with that health regen of hers, an hour's worth of sleep was enough to get her fully energized.

“We're going to go set up the barrier now. You coming?”

“I have to, don't I? My head would explode otherwise.”

“Correct! Follow us carefully.”

She seemed happy. Did she come to a firm conclusion last night? Bits of hay fell off my back as I stood up.

“Where's Necro?”

“Already setting up the barrier at the other side.”

“My, isn't he a busy man?”

The saint began to inspect my clothing once I got out of the stable.

“What?”

“Man~ This is why you’re never popular with the ladies!”

The saint took out a lint roller out of her wallet. It was something that came with the clothes that I had ordered last time.

“I look fine.”

“Stay still!”

The saint stuck the lint roller onto my back. Every time the roller moved across it, bits of hay were taken off. I twitched a few times in the process, which earned me a slap on the back.

“Mm...”

Shf, shf, shaa.

Next came my chest.

Shf, shf.

We were so close together that we could feel our breaths on each other. The smell of magnolia mixed with the smell of my dead body. After removing the hay from my body, the saint ended

everything with a slap on the butt.

“The end?”

“...Why the slap?”

“Fee.”

“.....”

“You seem dissatisfied. Why don’t you try slapping me as revenge, then? I’ll call the cops on you.”

“...Wait.”

I put on my helmet and my cloak. I felt that I’d need some sort of protection for myself.

We were on the hill above the village. I had thought that the barrier would be something quite fancy, but it turned out to be quite simple. She was just putting down a rubber rope right around the entire town.

“This is... simpler than what I expected.”

The saint asked me a question from the back.

“What did you expect then?”

“Well, I expected you to chant a magic spell that would encase the town in a magic light or something.”

“Just like how colored smoke rises from behind main characters in TV shows?”

“Not that dramatic.”

“Movies and animations probably make it look that fancy because they need to show it to an audience. I could make it look that fancy as well if I wanted...”

That was probably it.

“And this line?”

“It’s a simple hose~ If I put water in it later and circulate mana inside it, I can use it like a wire.”

“Aha.”

I think I get it. This must be another use of the conductivity of mana. In the end, a barrier was a type of magic that set certain

rules within a certain area. Of course, this area needed to have mana flowing in it, which resulted in the saint using a hose.

“Why don’t you try drawing a line instead?”

“Too unstable for a barrier of this size. If someone touches it, everything just disappears. Kids have a particular liking to touch stuff like this.”

Sounds like she had prior experience.

“Well...”

I asked her another question as I carried the rubber hose container with me.

“Can’t the same thing be accomplished with the hose though? What if someone cuts it?”

“I can substitute with my magic. Did you forget? I use light and water magic.”

Right.

“Once it’s set up properly, I can keep the water flowing even if the hose were to disappear.”

Plus, the area was being protected by soldiers at the moment, meaning that something like that was quite unlikely. The saint chanted her spell as she moved behind me.

“The rushing torrents of the castle of water, the lord of the deep watching over the eternal water. Morto Hai requests to you that you bring life to the water here.”

The pool of water connected with the hose disappeared. Nothing much seemed to happen on the outside, but after closer inspection, the droplets of water seemed to have come together into a ring-like shape. The circle won't break now, even if the hose got cut.

“Want to rest here, Mr. Murderer?”

The saint sat down on a stone near the riverbank as she said this. It was late noon already. The cold river water flowed downstream, carrying the red foliage with it. I quietly watched the saint that was almost buried within this autumn weather, then opened my mouth.

“Aren't you cold?”

The saint widened her eyes.

“Are you worried?”

“No, just wondering why you weren't using fire magic.”

The saint began to throw little pebbles at me. I dodged them easily, and continued talking.

“I thought you could use magic as long as you contracted a god?”

“...You really need to control your faustian impulses, Mr. Murderer. We should be talking about how beautiful the weather is, and here you are, talking about magic. I’m disappointed!”

“Really? Is that how normal people behave?”

The saint clapped off the dust on her hands and spoke.

“From the way I look at it, Mr. Murderer, your personality is flawed. You seem to be a narcissistic sociopath. The biggest evidence for this is the fact that you have not formally bowed to my beauty in awe yet. Such actions are actually set as laws in my nation.”

The German law?

I saw the saint, who was calling herself a beauty, as a narcissistic psychopath.

“Beauty, eh...?”

“Kuh..!”

“Beauty, huh...”

“Don’t say it twice!”

The saint blushed.

“In any case! You were in the wrong here, so apologize immediately by kneeling and barking. Go!”

“Damn it, I told you that I’d be your slave if I failed the mission.”

“Can we just get started on that a little early?”

“That wasn’t specified in the contract.”

“Tch.”

We moved away from the hills into a plain.

“So, can I hear the answer to the question from before?”

“...How persistent. Well, you weren’t wrong about your speculation, Mr. Murderer.”

The saint stomped forward.

“If you want to use fire magic, you’d have to form a contract with the god of fire. But it is extremely hard for a priest of water to become a priest of fire.”

Priest?

Ah... I suppose all wizards might as well be called that, since they form a contract with god.

“Would the god reject your contract?”

“Correct. The god of fire hates the god of water. If you have already formed a contract with the lord of the deep, the lord of the crimson spear will reject your request to form a contract.”

The gods also seemed to have certain “liking” towards certain people. Just like CEOs of big companies. They would only form contracts those they liked, and destroyed contracts occasionally as well. It was a convenient system, but also an unstable one.

“If you want to use powerful magic, you’ll have to contract a powerful god. And even if you formed a contract with that god, if you want to use an especially powerful magic, you’d have to form additional contracts. The better the contract, the bigger the price for it. For example, the god of fire requests ten thousand barrels of oil, along with a burn on your body.”

One hundred thousand dollars. The fact that you needed to suffer

from the burn made it all the less worth it.

“What about black magic?”

“.....”

Did she not hear?

“What about black...?”

“Don’t even think about it.”

The response was sharper than I thought. The reason for this is probably...

“Because it needs human sacrifice?”

The saint stopped right in her tracks. The usage of black magic would probably require a large amount of sacrifice. Sometimes, I assume it would require the user to kill a friend or even a family member as sacrifice.

“Never. Ever. Try to learn about it. It’s dangerous.”

“Necro uses it though. That means...”

The saint abruptly turned my way and shouted in anger.

“We’re finished talking about this! Mr. Murderer needs to think about communication more!”

...Just what went wrong here?

“I thought we were communicating just now.”

“Inquisition is not communication!”

“Then...?”

“Something like the other party’s interests...! Some...! I can’t explain it, but...!”

Her voice got louder.

“What happened recently. What you like. There’s a lot to talk about, you know?”

Useless. I was planning on leaving right after finishing this mission. There shouldn’t be any other encounters with the saint once I’m done with this. The only reason why I was so kind to her even now was because I needed to use her.

“If you want to talk about the interests we might have in common...”

Magic. Wars. Powers. Personalities.

Other than that...

“There’s nothing to talk about?”

The saint smiled brightly and walked towards me. Scary... That smile of hers indicated that she was incredibly angry. The saint motioned me to bend over, so I did so almost subconsciously.

“Mr. Murderer?”

The saint grabbed onto the two sides of my face, and headbutt it.

Bang!

My sight turned bright white for a second and a heavy bang resounded through the autumn forest.

Chapter 27. Ability User Battalion

As long as there is mana, one can make sacrifices to the gods in order to cast spells.

That would mean...

Even primitive people and monsters would be able to use magic. And the act of sacrificing to god to perform magic later on using an object as a catalyst would form a scroll or a spellstone. What a convenient world.

Well, the formation of a contract was a little complicated, but still...

The headbutt from the priest seemed to have cleared up my brain somewhat. My vision improved as well.

...It would be quite weird if I asked her to hit me more, right?

The saint was stomping her way forward for quite some time now. She seemed extremely angry. I suppose it couldn't be helped. After all, I pretty much just bombarded her with one question after another. If I could, I'd ask her to just compile all her knowledge into a document, but...

I know. It's a ridiculous thing to ask for.

I put down the hose, trying to keep track of the saint in front of me as I did so. Soon enough, we reached the plains. The saint just quietly walked forward following the dirt road in front of her. There were stones laid out to the side so that people wouldn't fall off the cliff next to the road. The saint seemed to walk perilously close to the cliff, so I decided to carefully watch her from behind. I managed to catch up to her at some point, so we began walking side by side as a result. By the time we almost arrived back at the town, the saint let out a strange sound as she lost her balance.

“Nnyah!”

I calmly caught her collar as she fumbled around chaotically. The saint narrowed her eyes at what I did.

“...If you have something to say, say it now.”

“Ah, sorry. Didn't have much to hold onto. Look, aren't I holding a container of hoses in my right hand? I would've grabbed your breasts if I could, but there really isn't much, as you might know.”

Tak.

The saint smiled widely, and grabbed on my head with her two hands. Her mana-enforced body gripped onto me like a vice. My body that had been revived with black magic began to burn in blue flames.

Oh dear...

Crack!

“Kah!”

A second headbutt. Blue flames were scattered into the wind.

“Ah...!”

At the same time, I lost my balance and fell backwards. My hand that was on the saint's collar ended up taking her down with me. And the container that was in my hand rolled away from me.

“Kuh...”

I reflexively tried to put my hand to my head, but ended up feeling something soft in the process. It just happened to be the saint's hair and back. The saint that was lying on top of me was so light and warm that I almost couldn't even bring the thought of moving her off through my head. Well, I threw her off like piece of baggage immediately afterwards though. Her brown hair and red lips reminded me of the autumn. She extended her arms to me, as if she was asking for help in getting up.

“Do it on your own.”

She silently swung her arms around, so I ended up grabbing onto just one of her hands to help her. She dusted off her skirt and

walked on as if nothing happened. I just silently followed her from the back.

We met Necro at the entrance to the village as promised. Next to him was his assistant, holding the hose dumbly.

“Why are you so damn late?”

“You always say that I’m late. Damn Koreans.”

The saint shrugged.

“We came right on time though?”

“Whatever. Just get the water going.”

“You think I’m a waterspout or some..?”

The saint annoyedly said this as she cupped her hands. Necro’s assistant put his hose above her hands.

“The rushing torrents of the castle of water.”

Mana began to pulsate in the surrounding area. The very first thing to do when casting magic was to classify the type of magic one would use.

“The lord of the deep watching over the eternal water.”

Next, the wizard would invoke the name of the god he or she is contracted with.

“Morto Hai requests to you that you quench the thirst of those that are here.”

Lastly, the wizard would set a target for the magic that would be cast. Once the casting time ended, water began to appear from the saint’s hands.

This was magic.

It was something quite similar to Oracle at its core. The user establishes a connection to the database and requests resources from afar. I suppose in modern terms, it would be like a walkie-talkie with remote charging capabilities. The water in the saint’s hands was pitiful at first, but the amount of water rapidly increased to uncontrollable amounts. Necro’s disciple skillfully controlled this water into the hose. After about five minutes of this, water began to flow out from the hose I was holding. Necro motioned me to give the hose to him, so I did.

“Alright, no problems here.”

He took the hose from his assistant and motioned him away.

“You’re done here. Leave.”

“No, professor...”

Necro frowned at his assistant's annoyed expression.

“What? Why?”

“Wow... Seriously, damn...”

“What is it? Just let it out, you idiot.”

“You brought me all the way out here just for this... I'm the only one in the eighth generation of our household, you know? Will you take responsibility if I die?”

Assistants are always destined to be in pain, no matter what world they're in huh.

“Are you rebelling against me?”

“No, no, It's not that...”

“Hey. Did you actually think I'd bring you to a dangerous place? It's all for your experience. I wouldn't have come here if things were going to get dangerous you know?”

“But professor, you have Overdeath...”

“Just go make some spellstones.”

The assistant was almost kicked out of the scene. The hose was still flowing with water even now.

“Hah... That bastard, he’s starting to rebel now that he’s grown a bit.”

Necro cracked his neck a few times and put the hose together.

“The noble will that resides on the throne of crimson flames. The lord of the crimson spear that protects the eternal flame. I, Necro Kill, requests that you merge these two hoses together into one.”

His tone was serious, unlike the time when he was treating his assistant. Well, this was a sort of prayer, after all. I suppose you couldn’t really rap your way through it. After the chant was finished, the rubber hose melted to merge with the other one. White smoke began to rise from the connected area. I looked at this and judged Necro’s action with a single sentence.

“You might as well have used a lighter.”

“Pah, using magic’s way cooler. In any case, voila! The barrier is complete! Wah~ we’re done with our job here. Ugh, my hips hurt from working so much.”

Working my ass... All he did was circle the town once and chant a little bit. When Necro began to massage his hips, the saint began to massage her shoulders.

“Oh, my shoulders. Now all we have to do is to cover up the hose with dirt.”

“Let the others take care of that. Let’s just go eat.”

“We worked hard~!”

It almost seemed like they were concluding everything by themselves. Was this fine? Really? I thought they’d make a trap or something... Soldiers began to wildly run around behind me. Those who were hidden in the forest began moving as well.

Could it be, already..?

I tried to modify the floating eye to look past the bridge, but...

‘There’s nothing wrong. There’s nothing else to see here, so let’s look somewhere else.’

Instead of getting the visual information I wanted, I ended up reaching a strange conclusion.

“.....”

I don't think like this. Something was wrong here. I tried to look over the bridge once again, but again I reached a strange conclusion.

‘There's nothing wrong here. Isn't there something better I have to do?’

Was this a countermeasure against surveillance? I turned off the floating eye and looked over the bridge using my own eyes. What was on it was a group of soldiers with guns in their hands. There seemed to be a child in their midst, but most of them looked like exhausted young men. I couldn't see many soldiers with injuries on them, unlike the soldiers from the first group. Seeing how their weapons were relatively new, they probably didn't have much experience in battle.

The only group to arrive now would be the Second Subjugation Battalion.

I could observe all this easily, but when I looked with the floating eye again, I reached the conclusion that I saw nothing. If someone asked me about what I saw now, I'd probably answer that I saw nothing.

This must be the work of a power.

“Ah, they came fast.”

I realized that my suspicions were correct when Necro said this. I

had been observing the outskirts of the town every once in awhile to make sure nothing strange was approaching. The reason why I didn't notice them was probably because one of them managed to fool my floating eye. I saw them, but didn't notice them. Because I didn't think much of them, they didn't even remain in my memories. It probably worked like that. As I watched them cross the bridge, I thought of what I had read about them in the reports.

The 2nd battalion of the 15th regiment of the 17th division. Commonly referred to as the "Ability User Battalion".

It was composed of the [Storm], a group that boasted in super speed, and [Hundred Eight Eyes], a group that was composed of demon eye users. A hundred summoned people who have been trained as soldiers-

They were the spotlight of this mission.

"They are...?"

I had thought that the soldiers would walk across first, but those at the back of the group were coming out to the front. For whatever reason, they were pulling supply carts and were lining them up in front of the bridge.

"...They're assistants."

Assistants?

The people that just got off from the supply carts seemed quite fatigued. They had bags under their eyes and they were hunched over in exhaustion. The saint paused for a moment before she continued to talk.

“They repair equipment and help the summoned people to be able to live in comfort... They’re quite the people.”

She seemed to be dissatisfied with something.

“Well, she isn’t wrong.”

Necro butted in right as the saint finished speaking.

“But honestly, they’re just slaves.”

The saint glared at Necro.

“Ah, what? He should know stuff like this. Am I wrong? They’re the ones that fulfill our every request and sacrifice themselves. They even go through the danger zones to check if the area’s safe or not. Might as well be meat shields at this point.”

Necro waved his arms frantically as he spoke.

“Having no power in this world is a sin! You got that? I’ll say something quote-worthy to you now, so be sure to write it down! ‘Power is status’. Okay? Just look at me, haven’t I earned the rank

of a colonel at this age?”

A colonel, huh. It seemed that in this world, lieutenant colonels were in charge of normal foot soldiers, with colonels being in charge of soldiers with special abilities.

“Did you know? Those guys are in charge of night entertainment as well. Doesn’t matter what gender you are as long as you’re pretty. How do I know? I was almost a victim of it.”

I could feel strange gazes behind my back, so I turned around. I could see bear-like men cover their chests and genitals.

“.....”

It seemed that the soldiers of the First Subjugation Battalion came to watch. I turned back to look at the Second Subjugation Battalion.

“Looks like conscription.”

“Oh, you noticed quick.”

This much was obvious. To the nation, ability users were valuable resources that could potentially turn into terrorists. They had to create multiple laws around them to prevent accidents. They probably set up a system to control the ability users, then created laws to restrict them. And they probably also created a system to force summoned people to fight each other at certain

situations.

The easiest system that could achieve this was conscription.

After all, it would always be easier to use the law against someone rather than using money to bait them in. If the summoned people did not obey the law, they would become outcasts. They had no choice but to join the army if they didn't want to be jailed, and by using the people who had already joined the army to further enforce the law, a structure was formed where summoned people kept checks on each other from trying to rebel. This way the nation was able to bring stability and at the same time, increase their military's capabilities.

“Am I a conscripted soldier as well then?”

“Hmm... Who knows? You're a corpse, so I wonder how you were processed? What, you worried?”

“Not really.”

The carts only began to move after the assistants all moved across the bridge. They must've concluded that the bridge was safe. Something like this could only happen when the military help supplies rather than humans in higher regard.

“You seem to dislike it somewhat.”

“Just look. They're quite a lot like... Old men who got

conscripted in the middle of doing something. Don't you think so?"

Well... They were people who came from a different world, after all. Plus, half of the members of [Storm] were Korean.

"Just think about it. They're in their middle ages, and they were conscripted to the military? Some people are doing this twice you know. I came to a different world to experience this kind of shit..."

Necro let out an angry laugh.

"To hell with fun adventures. I just got conscripted... Just conscripted, god damn it. Do you know how maddening that is? That's why most of the guys in Storm have shitty personalities. Better not get along with them too much."

I nodded and went back to observing the group.

Chapter 28. Eye Of Death

The soldiers moved last after the supply cards. The first to go in was the Storm. A group that specialized in speed... I suppose it's based around the fact that mobility is extremely important when it comes to soldiers. Soldiers always needed to establish high ground over their enemies, and Storm was most likely in charge of that. The members of the group began to show themselves as they crossed the bridge. The name of their powers were...

Accelerator, Superspeed, Godspeed, High Speed, Extreme Speed, Ultra Speed, Sound Breaker, Quick, Rocket, Boost, Velocity, Full speed, Haste, Nimble Legs, Demonic Legs, Steel Legs, Unlimited Sprinter...

There were many beings that sought extreme speed. To catch prey. To escape predators. Speed was easy to think of, and the effects of it were amazingly effective. The reason why there isn't anyone with the ability "Light Speed" is probably because no one has fulfilled the conditions for it yet. Perhaps someone here can achieve it. If they survive, that is. Of course, the group wasn't just made of people who had powers associated with speed. This could be seen by the people who didn't cross the bridge. These people used different methods to "teleport" across the bridge.

Geo-leaping, Teleportation, Ambush, Shadow Jumper, Beeline, Overtake, Demonic Walker.

There were many ability users like this in the world. The saint who had been watching this process quietly suddenly turned to

look at me.

“Internet shopping.”

The grin on her face ended up making me retaliate. I said this whilst wondering if this would be the sort of thing a person with the personality I was faking would say.

“Don’t call it internet shopping. Call it HOG.”

“Hog? As in the swine?”

“Ah! What’s this button here? Cancel order? Women’s coats for the autumn? Trendy shoes? Cheesecake?”

The saint gripped onto my cloak with a trembling hand.

“Heart of Gold is the best.”

“Should’ve said that from the start.”

Once the first group passed, the second, Hundred Eight Eyes, began to make their move. One of these people nullified my floating eye.

But... Their appearance was a bit...

Most of these people were wearing bandages or glasses to cover up their eyes somehow. This, of course, led me to think of them as chuuninbyous.

“Ah!”

The saint made a face as if she had just thought of something.

“Surprise quiz!”

Again? The saint raised her index finger.

“The name Hundred Eight Eyes was formed because of the number of eyes that the number of people in the group had! There are six that have lost one of their eyes, and there are five who have two demon eyes. How many demon eyes are there in total?”

“62.”

Didn't even need to think.

“Fast! How?!”

“It was written in the report.”

“Kuh! To think there was such a method!”

The saint slapped her forehead as she made a surprised expression.

There were 43 in Storm, and 57 in Hundred Eight Eyes.

I had read everything about them through the reports already.

“Can I ask you something?”

I approached her carefully. As a person who just came to this world, I had a lot that I was curious about, but if I kept asking her questions like before, I might get her to hate me. The saint seemed to realize that I was being careful with her and grinned as a result.

“I’ll answer from now on as long as you call me teacher.”

Necro clicked his tongue and pointed at the saint when he heard this.

“Hey! Just ask me instead. How is she supposed to be a saint anyhow? All she does is take advantage of people.”

“Stay out of this, outsider.”

“How am I an outsider?”

“Because you’re going to be one from now on?”

The saint balled up her fist and began to gather holy energy into it. Necro was probably at an elemental disadvantage when it came to the saint.

“...Uh, I’m an outsider, now that I think about it. You two have fun.”

He backed off easily.

“Now fire away, student. Just don’t ask me lewd questions about my body, ok?”

The saint winked as she said this. Seeing how she was leaning forward with her hands on her hips, it seemed like she was trying to emphasize her chest.

I wasn’t interested in such a pose at all.

“My question is simple. Is it possible for people to have two demon eyes? I thought a person could only have a single power?”

I added a word at the end with dullness.

“Teacher.”

Judging by her reaction, she was satisfied.

“Calling me a teacher like that, Mr. Murderer, you’re too much~”

You told me to call you that...

“Good question! Does having two demon eyes mean that a person has two powers? One might think that. But in the end, the person only has a single power.”

“How so?”

“For example, if a person had the ability ‘temperature control’, what could he do with it? He could boil water, but also be able to freeze it. Two demon eyes are there to achieve opposite effects.”

“So in the end, they work just like other powers?”

“Pretty much. You might have two demon eyes that can work together with each other instead of one that works against each other, but their powers would be significantly weaker compared to other demon eyes.”

I got it. It’s like how Nimble Legs couldn’t be as fast as Godspeed at the same level. There were choices between focusing on one aspect of the ability, or focusing on versatility. Whilst I kept asking the saint more questions, the people of the First Subjugation Battalion all passed the bridge. All except one person.

“So that’s the rumored...”

The soldiers were muttering amongst themselves.

“I had heard that was the strongest person in the battalion, but he’s just a kid?”

A child who had one of his eyes bandaged shut was casually crossing the bridge. Unlike the others, he was wearing very casual clothing. A loose white t-shirt, along with a black jacket. His white hair in the wind managed to highlight his confident face.

Death Eye.

A demon eye that was said to be able to kill any living animal just by looking at it. When I first heard of this ability, I managed to see just how unfair this world was.

Well, I have accepted the fact for what it is now...

People die instantly when they get shot in the head, after all. I guess it’s like a pretty good sniper rifle. The Haze Republic probably gave this strategy a go because of this trump card. The people on the other side of the bridge were all waiting for this child to cross the bridge. It clearly showed how much importance the Death Eye held in the group. I looked at his status screen for a second, then thought of a question.

“What happens if immortality clashes with the Death Eye?”

Would the world end from a creation of a paradox? No way.

“Well...”

The saint didn't really seem to know the answer either.

“Wouldn't the 'weaker power' give out..? If there was a contention between the two powers, the Warrior would come out as the winner.”

If the Death Eye and immortality just clashed against each other and didn't do anything due to equal power, it would end up being a failure. After thinking a little bit, the saint opened her mouth.

“I think immortality would win.”

“The reason being?”

“The Death Eye is sort of a master key. Most doors can be opened with it, but it becomes useless in front of a door that requires fingerprints.”

“What if Death Eye was similar to bombs?”

“Not enough mana to get the desired effect.”

In order to raise the power of an explosion, one needed to contain the explosion within a smaller area, or just use more explosives. The saint was basically commenting on this.

“The Death Eye probably relies on a certain method to achieve its effect. It might stop the activity of the brain, or it might sever the connection between the body and the soul. It might even create poison in someone’s circulatory system.”

No matter what happens, it would look like the victim just died from a glance. I agreed with the saint’s theory.

“Right. I think the Death Eye wouldn’t be enough either. Necro wouldn’t have summoned me otherwise.”

There was no better expert on death compared to Necro. A magic that connected a soul to a corpse was something that could not be cast without a complete understanding of it. The Death Eye that crossed the bridge didn’t walk over to his friends, but rather, to us.

“So you’re the Special Task Force?”

“Yes. You want something?”

The Death Eye scanned my body once, then let out a laugh.

“Kahahaha! You’re actually level one! What the hell?”

Kahaha...? I've never seen anyone laugh like that. I mean, the saint herself has a pretty weird laugh, but still...

“The strongest? At that level?”

I personally thought that it was an error on Oracle's part. But there wasn't any real need to talk about that.

[Don't bother with him.] [Yeah, just ignore him. He's just a kid.] The two spoke to me using telepathy. The Death Eye began to act out even more when he saw that I wasn't responding to him.

“What are you planning on doing with that shopping ability? You planning on bribing the Warrior? How stupid~”

The Death Eye already knew of my ability. The rumor had probably spread throughout the whole military already. Two people from Storm came over, thinking that something entertaining was going on.

It was Godspeed and Accelerator. Accelerator was a man in his early forties, and was a colonel like Necro. Godspeed was a man in his late thirties and a lieutenant colonel.

“What are you doing? Everyone's waiting for you.”

When Accelerator said this, the Death Eye waved over at them and motioned for them to come over with a smile.

“You came at the right time. Look, look. This idiot’s title’s hilarious!”

Accelerator checked my status screen using the Oracle.

“...History’s worst? Ah, so this is...”

His lips curled upwards a little, then immediately curled back down again. He must’ve thought that his actions might’ve been rude. On the other hand, Godspeed just smirked.

“Titles can be acquired by doing jack shit. He must’ve been pretty popular in his town or something.”

The saint gripped onto my cape.

[If you fight here, they’ll take this to court... You’ll have to endure this for now.] That was what I was planning on doing. They weren’t really getting me mad anyway. But Necro didn’t seem to think so.

“Hah... Do you people actually see me as a piece of shit or something?”

His cold voice immediately muted the area.

“What the hell do you think you’re doing?”

“Hey, hey. Don’t try to butt in here. Our kid’s just getting a little interested in this guy here is all.”

Accelerator stepped in front of Necro.

“Interested?”

“This is supposed to be your ace, right? Why not let the aces of each group try to work things out with each other?”

Necro laughed dumbfoundedly.

“Move.”

“I’ll buy you alcohol later, alright? Don’t try to butt into kids’ business. They’re just getting overly excited is all.”

“Godspeed? Death Eye? Life really gotten better, hasn’t it? Trash that I wouldn’t even have bothered to check out during the great war’s just saying whatever they want to me now.”

Godspeed lowered his head in acknowledgement at that. Unlike him, Death Eye raised his voice in annoyance.

“What? Trash?”

“Hey! Be quiet!”

Accelerator tried to stop him, but Death Eye refused to stop.

“What did you call me?”

I’m quite curious actually. Would Death Eye be able to kill Necro?

“Eh? You didn’t hear?”

Accelerator gave up on stopping Death Eye.

“You must be fucking deaf. I’ll tell you as much as you want. You. Are. A. Piece. Of. Trash.”

“Die..!!”

Death Eye raised his hand, attempting to take off his bandage. Immediately after though.

“...Kuh!”

Death Eye’s hand stopped in its tracks. Godspeed was using one hand to grab onto Death Eye’s hand, and the other to put a knife on the boy’s neck.

“Don’t move.”

Fast. I didn't manage to see anything until the knife was on Death Eye's neck already.

"Slowly. Put your hand down."

Death Eye seemed to have come to his senses a bit after hearing Godspeed's cold voice, and put his hand down. Godspeed quickly put his knife away and made Death Eye bow.

"Apologies!"

He didn't say more. Death Eye's face was filled with humiliation. He seemed to think he wasn't getting the respect he deserved.

"Ah, good. Good. You can raise your heads now."

Accelerator tried to calm the mood.

"It's because he's just so young. You were like that, too, weren't you? All fired up and stuff."

"When was I ever like that? Discipline your subordinates, damn."

"In any case, I have to go now. Those guys over there need to eat."

The whole thing seemed to be almost over now.

“The alcohol?”

“After we kill the Warrior.”

“You’re not going back on your word?”

“Yeah, yeah.”

The Accelerator slapped the back of Death Eye’s head.

“What are you doing? Apologize.”

Death Eye rubbed the back of his head and glared my way.

“Don’t you dare get in my way. You won’t even get the spotlight with me taking action anyway.”

“.....”

Crack!

Accelerator slapped the back of Death Eye’s head again.

“You call that an apology? I’m sorry, I’ll apologize in his stead.

The boy's a bit immature.”

Accelerator disappeared with Death Eye after saying this.

“You endured well!”

The saint grabbed my hand.

Fwoosh!

The hand caught on holy fire. It felt like my hand was being roasted. I immediately shook her off, and asked Necro a question.

“What the hell was that?”

“JOCA.”

“JOCA?”

“Kids who think they're (J)ustice because (O)f their (C)heat (A)bilities.”

They have quite the strange slangs here, huh...

I felt like I was a bit behind on the current trend when I heard Necro's words.

Chapter 29. The Warrior vs. The Military

Day-o, 6AM.

The key members of the mission had all been called into the War Room.

“I’m sure everyone here knows of the plans at this point, but I’ll go over them one last time just in case.”

The American strategist used his pointer to point at the map of the town.

“We will be splitting the town into twenty six sectors. The battle will occur at areas F, G, and H. Our supplies are located in area Z, so please try not to take the fight over to that area.”

This much already made the battleground 350,000 square meters.

“The Warrior is set to arrive at 13:30. This may be off by up to twenty minutes. The strategy might have to be changed according to the scenario, but the basic gist of the plan goes like this.”

The strategist circled the bridge.

“First off, we’ll set up a group of soldiers to guard the center of

the bridge. This will be the interdiction line for the Warrior. If the Warrior manages to get out, consider the plan a failure, and focus on keeping the soldiers alive.”

Did the military think that there was a higher chance of failure rather than success?

“Once he successfully crosses the bridge, we will blow it up, and seal him up inside the town. Once this is done, the task force will activate the barrier to keep him inside.”

The strategist mentioned after this that only visual communication was allowed before the barrier was set up.

“After this, the First Subjugation Group will make its move. They will get into a net formation all over sectors F~H. They will lead the Warrior to sector J, trying to bait out his blessing magic.”

Blessing magic.

The Warrior carried three spellstones with him, and using one of them activated an hour long blessing magic that had a six-hour cooldown.

“The second barrier will be cast when the target uses his spellstone. We will disable the blessing there. After that point, the Second Subjugation Battalion will come into play.”

Many people from the First Subjugation Battalion were expected

to die here, but it wasn't like they could risk losing a person with a power in this strategy. Life wasn't equal, after all. A strategy that made use of sacrifices rather than pure firepower from the start... The saint seemed quite depressed.

“Storm will work with the Hundred Eight Eyes in taking down the Warrior's blessing. This is the most important part. You must secure the safety of the members of the Hundred Eight Eyes. If anything happens, teleporters must evacuate the Hundred Eight Eyes immediately.”

Demon eye users had quite a bit of firepower, but they were quite slow at the same time. That's why they worked with Storm to increase their mobility. They must cause quite a bit of annoyance to their enemies. After all, they were quite similar to artillery guns moving at the speed of fighter jets.

I sent a message to the grim-faced saint as a joke.

[You need to see the fairy?] [...You want to die?] [Too late.] [Focus, damn it.] The strategist began to introduce things we had to be wary of after finishing up his talk about the plan.

“The battalion aid station is located on the other side of the bridge, and...”

The briefing ended after two hours. After this, we were all assigned to our respective positions. The current time was 1:20PM and it was almost time. I raised my eye to the sky and observed the town from above. It seemed like one of the most peaceful things

that I had ever seen. But this would soon turn into a warzone.

Normally, wars in this world would start off with wizards firing off their long-range magic spells. Once the magic landed, the infantry would go in. The squads of ability users would attempt to assassinate the enemy commander.

But this time, the order was switched. The infantry went first, and the wizards and the ability users came last. The reason for this was simple.

The enemy just didn't die.

Knowing this, the military just gave up trying to use firepower to defeat the Warrior. After all, the one who came up with this plan wasn't a complete idiot. Well, he seemed to have missed a critical point in the mission, though.

"He's here."

An observer raised his flag high up in the air. The flag was yellow, signifying the Warrior's arrival. I observed the Warrior with my floating eye. He was well over two meters tall, and was all around well-built. He had quite the friendly face. I had expected him to be muscular and large, but that didn't really seem to be the case.

"Ah..."

I had realized that I wouldn't be able to beat the Warrior. I used to be called the strongest back in my world, but the standards for this world was so out of whack that I just didn't think I could beat him.

"Hey, old man, stop."

The saint grabbed my cape when I tried to escape.

"Come back."

I ended up sitting back on the dirt.

"We need to run. We can't rely on tactics we don't even know will work."

This wasn't someone we could take on with just numbers. He was a superhuman that had surpassed death. There wasn't a 100% chance of my plan working, which meant that it was more profitable for me to run away. But the saint seemed to think differently.

"If you run away, more people will die. We have to block him here..."

Her hand gripped onto my cloak tightly. She must've resolved herself last night. She decided that she would sacrifice the minority to save the majority. Without even realizing that she was part of the minority. I felt the need to tell this idiot saint

something at this time.

“People die. Even now, three people are dying every second. So instead of caring about other people, why don’t you care about yourself for once? Don’t you remember what I told you last night?”

“This is my duty.”

The saint sounded steadfast. I just decided to close my mouth. There was no need to provoke her any further. Even if what I said turned out to be correct, I wouldn’t try to argue my viewpoint with her.

After all, I wasn’t normal.

The flag changed to blue. The target was almost near the designated area. Whistle blows began to sound repeatedly. Immediately after this, the demolitionists pressed the device that was to destroy the bridge.

–Baang!

The shockwave shook the town.

Kuoooh! Clack, drrrr-drrr-.

The windows of the nearby building began to vibrate rapidly.

Dust began to fall off the roofs. The first order of action was to destroy the bridge. The isolated Warrior was looking at the broken bridge with a dumbfounded face.

Of course he'd be confused. The attack wasn't aimed at him, after all.

Next, the wizards would come into play.

"I submit to the contract."

"I shall follow our oral agreement."

Shaaah.

The barrier that the saint and Necro had created activated and formed a dome around the town. The area of effect even went underground. Now, the Warrior had no means of escape.

"The first barrier has been activated. For the next six hours, those apart from a select few teleporters will not be able to exit the area."

A messenger in front of the saint saluted and ran away somewhere. The explosion and the activation of the barrier. I wonder how the Warrior would respond? I would've either tried to run the moment I found out there was a trap, or would've tried to hide. It was dangerous to fight enemies that I didn't know about after all.

But the enemy was a hero.

The moment he realized something was afoot, he stepped into the trap with the intent of finding out what was going on, and with the intent of saving everyone trapped inside.

So he hadn't realized it yet.

He felt that something was a little off due to the soldiers disguised as villagers, but 'because he wasn't attacked yet', he didn't do anything rash. He probably didn't want to get any innocent bystanders hurt. This was probably a hero's greatest weakness.

A villain would've immediately tried to secure a prisoner... The soldiers hidden near the Warrior raised their weapons. What was inside were modified bullets with a heightened killing ability. They were like dum-dum bullets or G2R RIP that were injected with nicotine. Perhaps the only good thing the summoned people did for this world was the creation of modern weapons. It all started with a nameless person using his power to recreate a modern weapon. Because primitive guns were already being circulated in the world, crafters were able to easily replicate this modern gun, which immediately spread across the world.

"A little forward..."

The machine gunners inside the building put their fingers on the triggers. Right now, the Warrior was located in the town square. It

was strangely quiet here. No one could be seen, but gazes and killing intent could be felt everywhere. The Warrior was sure that this was a trap, but he didn't turn back. He kept walking forward. Because-

“...Mr. Henry?”

There was a member of the rebellion tied up in the middle of the town square. The people of the military here were quite meticulous. They resorted to just about anything in order to complete their mission. The hostage desperately tried to tell the Warrior to stay away, but the Warrior didn't stop.

“Mmph! Mph! Mmmph!”

The rivets on the steel chair he was tied to almost seemed to fall off due to all the shaking. He was desperately trying to help his ally, despite all the torture he went through. The Warrior clearly read the hostage's intent, but kept walking anyway. And the moment he touched the hostage.

A spellstone prepared earlier exploded, and turned the whole area into a swamp.

Ratatatatatat-!

The soldiers immediately began showering the area with bullets. There were countless bullets being shot from three different directions. Curtains ripped apart in buildings, and pieces of wood

splintered everywhere from the destruction. The snipers on top put their hands on the triggers. Their weapon was a monster subjugating sniper rifle. What was in their sights was the Warrior, who was letting out orange sparks from his body. Yet, the Warrior was extremely calm. The snipers trembled a little bit when they saw that the Warrior didn't even twitch.

...Did the bullets have no effect?

The man didn't even seem to try to dodge them. In fact, he was completely ignoring the bullets. It made one realize just how high the Warrior's defense stat was. The Warrior looked down at the hostage, who was now just red mush on the chair, and raised his head.

Clang! Clang!

Bullets harmlessly bounced off of the Warrior's body. The man lowered his head a little bit, then turned around. The soldiers ran out of the buildings and surrounded the Warrior with barbed wires. They set it up in the form of a spider's web, in order to contain the warrior. They then set up behind the web with their War Hammer Pistols and the Iron Shield Pistols. These were weapons that fused guns with hammers and guns. They might not be the most effective weapons, but their destructive power was guaranteed. The Warrior probably wouldn't be able to get out of that formation easily.

“In eras like this, savages who fight with swords and not guns stand no chance against us!”

A commander shouted this to the soldiers.

“Let’s show the world that the title of a hero is but a thing of the past!”

Unlike his brave demeanor, the commander’s voice was trembling violently. He was unable to erase the intense fear that was on his face.

Tatatatata! Pii! Tatatatatata!

The bullets that bounced off of the Warrior were forming a little mound under him at this point. The Warrior flipped his brown hair once, then waved his hand in the air.

Piin!

A sharp sound resounded through the air. The machine gunners and the snipers fell down. Next, he waved his hand behind him. With these two hand motions, the entire square became silent. None of the soldiers that had just been firing their weapons were moving.

“What in the...?”

The commander asked this with a trembling voice. He must have not seen it. The Warrior just stiffened his hair and used it as a

projectile against the soldiers. He must be able to modify his body like me.

“I thought something was off... So you were the soldiers of Haze.”

The Warrior now realized who the enemy was. That should mean that the Warrior's next move would be to 'escape', but...

“You better be ready for daring to fire at me.”

The commander gripped his heart in pain when the Warrior glared directly at him. It was coming. The Warrior lowered his body, and put his finger into the stone floor with just pure strength

Pshh.

His hand scooped up stone like ice cream from the floor. When he applied some pressure to it, the stone split to multiple pieces, causing stone dust to spill out of his hand.

Chapter 30. A Man Who Surpassed Death

The faces of the soldiers darkened immediately. Even veterans like them couldn't handle the imminent future laid out before them.

Certain death.

Their bodies froze at this inescapable truth. Their pores widened up to pour out sweat. It was the consequences of their actions really.

Chua-

The Warrior got into an overhead throw position with his leg extended up into the air. The man was unbelievably flexible. Once his leg hit the ground, the cobblestone floor exploded. His arm muscles contracted and then stretched out. The bits of stone in his hand shot out like bullets.

Pshh!

The buckshot hit the steel shields that the soldiers were holding, and let out sparks.

“Eh...?”

A soldier looked down with a curious face. The hole in his shield allowed him to see the other side of the street.

“No... Way...”

Blood and organs began to spill out from his chest. The soldier fell backwards from the pain and blood loss immediately afterwards. This single attack killed five and heavily injured eight. Some lost their heads while others lost their limbs. The strategist lowered the hand he used to protect his face. He immediately paled at the scene in front of him. Blood and bits of flesh were laid out everywhere before him.

‘He’ll go easy on us since he’s a hero.’

‘There’s no way he’d treat us like he treats monsters... right?’

The fighting spirit within the eyes of the soldiers shattered once they found out that their expectations of the Warrior were not at all what they expected them to be.

Was this how strong people could get once they overcame death...?

I remembered the contents of the report. The reason why he was able to become so strong was not because of mana. It was training. Because he had overcome death, he was able to put himself through inhuman training. Normally, overtraining the body would damage the muscles. In bad cases, the cell walls of the

muscles would become damaged, and the myoglobin that gets released into the bloodstream would damage the body even further. In other words, the muscles would melt.

But.

This overtraining managed to put the Warrior into levels that humans couldn't reach before. Because he couldn't die. To be more exact, because the cause of death would be removed whenever he died. His body didn't get damaged, but instead, it managed to slowly adapt to the hellish environment it was put through.

Body enhancement. It was the result of countless hours of training in battle. Through intense training and fighting, the Warrior was able to attain an extremely dense body unlike that of any human. His muscles that were at first large enough to burst through his skin contracted into what it is now due to his sheer strength. And the bones that were unable to take this pressure restructured themselves into something more flexible and sturdy. Currently, the Warrior's body mass was at 2.6 tonnes. The rumors of him eating an entire cow every day to maintain his body probably wasn't an exaggeration. If he, at this state, begins to use mana and puts on blessing magic...

It was terrifying to imagine.

According to stories, the Warrior was said to have taken on a beast bigger than this town, all by himself. In the sea at that. Maybe we should've brought cannons instead of guns? Not that that would work in any way... It wasn't like the battle would end just because the soldiers lost their will to fight. The soldiers slowly

closed in on the Warrior, and began to fire. This entire town was a hunting ground to catch the Warrior. The Warrior didn't even bother clearing out the barbed wires, and walked right through them.

Snap, snap.

The barbed wire was unable to even put a minor wound on the Warrior. They simply snapped off of the Warrior's body. The place where he was headed to was the bridge. One could feel from his aura that he was willing to kill anyone who approached him. But at the same time, it felt like he was unwilling to kill those who did not attack him. To think he wouldn't be maddened by the military killing an acquaintance of his, he really was a hero.

He was sickeningly kind.

Pshh!

The M18A1 mines that had been placed on the two buildings next to the Warrior, exploded. 1500 3mm bullets shot out of the mines at three times the speed of sound. Any normal man would've died instantly from this attack, but...

Whoosh!

A human shape shot out of the debris like a giant cannonball. This was probably the last thing that the soldier from a watchtower saw before he died.

Bang! Crack, craack!

The watchtower began to crumble into pieces. To think he'd be able to just jump that high with his legs...

A jump of 120m. Seeing how the bridge was 1.2km long, it seemed that he could've easily crossed the bridge if he wanted. The Warrior looked over the town from the top of the tower. The military's entire plans were exposed to him now. The First Subjugation Battalion tried to keep the Warrior busy, but utterly failed. Due to this, those who were excluded from the plans altogether had to step in.

Not even those from other battalions could just stand watching their fellow soldiers die.

"Hah, ridiculous. They seemed so confident and they didn't even manage to bait out the blessings."

Godspeed grabbed double barrel shotguns into each hand, and sighed.

"This is why we should never rely on useless people. Don't you think so, colonel?"

Accelerator tried to knock off the cigarette off of Godspeed's mouth with his foot, but failed.

“Shut up, idiot. We’ve been found.”

The bottom of the Accelerator’s chin was completely black. It was shining too.

“Damn it, he did notice!”

The first thing the Warrior did when he noticed the two was to put his hands on the pouch on his waist. Seeing how that pouch survived the explosion and the gunfire, it wasn’t a simple item either. Was that where he kept his spellstones...?

The warrior would protect the one thing he thought was the most important to himself, and the two would attempt to take it away from him. Even if they don’t take it away, it would end up being a success if they baited the Warrior to use his spellstones.

“Your mouth is the problem, you hear? That’s why you’re always under me even when you’re faster than me.”

Godspeed raged when he heard this.

“Damn it, speed isn’t everything, power is! The reason why I respect you so much is...”

“Just shut up and get ready to fight. Do we really have to drag this on much longer? My back freaking hurts.”

Accelerator cracked his neck a few times with his hands on his hips and raised his hand.

“Ah, sorry, sorry! It’s been awhile since we’ve met, but we’ve just ended up in a situation like this.”

The two seemed to know each other.

“Life is quite annoying, isn’t it? Whatever, if the top tells me to do something, I guess I have to do it.”

The Warrior listened to the Accelerator quietly, then put the spellstone on his armor.

[Changeling Armor = Horganrel] – Rank: C

– A custom mail armor created by the [Mad Frog Valdka], the thirty fourth enemy of humanity. The curse on this armor would turn anyone with a low magic tolerance who wears this into a frog.

– Changes properties of objects. It can change shape, color, volume, density, and material of an object, but it can have a chance of failure. The bigger the change, the more mana it costs.

The armor changed to cover his entire body. Next, red matter

climbed up his neck in order to cover half of his face.

“You being here means that... The Second Subjugation Battalion was deployed. Are you surrounding the entire area?”

Godspeed didn't deny the Warrior's suspicions.

“You know well. Don't think too badly of us. We think highly enough of you to have to surround you. Oh, dear me. I speak too much. Are you good now? I think we gave you enough time to use your spellstones.”

The Warrior grinned.

“I don't need it.”

“Really? We'll start then.”

Accelerator took a deep breath out of the cigarette in his hand, and threw it up into the air. Accelerator and Godspeed immediately disappeared from the spot at this point. By the time the wind from their movements cleared up, and people were able to open their eyes again and they saw Godspeed put his double barrel shotgun on the Warrior's face. Before he even started to fall, he shot the gun four times in a row.

Ka-bam!

Four shots at point blank range. Sparks flew off the Warrior's face as four buckshots struck his face. The Warrior's face was simply drawn back a little bit. Other than a tiny burn mark, no wounds appeared on the Warrior's face.

This really was a world of demons. To think movements like those were possible...

Even after I saw it, I didn't believe it. Bodies who manage to near the speed of sound sustain injuries on their hands, knees, and feet. Once a human body goes past the speed of sound, it causes several parts of the body to start vibrating.

It must be near-impossible to run when the body is shaking like this. It was questionable if the joints would even survive. Plus, the amount of air one would have to come in contact with was far too great. It was expected that the body would just float off of the ground before it even reached the speed of sound. Well, of course, before that, the heart would explode, the blood vessels would pop, and steam would be rising from the body. For example, when a fighter jet breaks the sound barrier, it becomes as hot as 177 degrees celsius. Wouldn't organisms that go past the speed of sound be able to resist the heat and the shock that comes with it? Running faster than sound also required the muscles to go with it, but it didn't seem like the ability users had that either.

Due to this, it was easy to conclude that Godspeed's power was a "cheat" of sorts. It made use of other methods to go past the speed of sound. He was fast, but he probably wouldn't be able to use that velocity of his to cause destruction.

Accelerator was different, however. The weapon he brought was a simple blade. A weapon without any handles, or decorations. Out of nowhere, he brought out multiple blades floating in the air and constantly threw them at the Warrior.

[Metal Gas Casting Machine] – Rank: B

– A weapon that is able to reconstruct itself into different weapons. Simple weapons can be created immediately on the spot. Normally, it can stick to the skin in order to become something similar to armor.

Kiii!

The sound of metal crossing the air rang across the field a bit later. The Warrior's face and chest had exploded from the heat of the blade going through him, causing steaming blood to fly everywhere.

The estimated velocity of the blade was mach 25.

No matter how great the defense of the Warrior was, he wasn't able to stop plasma blades coming for his face. But...

“Fucking hell!”

Godspeed cursed. He would restrain the Warrior with a shotgun,

and Accelerator would destroy the Warrior from afar. But the battle just didn't seem to end. No matter how many times his head would be destroyed, no matter how many times his body was burnt away, his body would regenerate back in a second. It was the same for his armor as well. Hiranrel was an armor that was able to shapeshift itself. If one fuses the Warrior's cells into Hiranrel, it would...

I thought of the word 'regenerate', then stopped myself. Was that really regeneration? Heat caused irreversible reactions. Due to this, Memento Mori would have to recreate the body completely from the start. But if you were to try to explain it like this...

The burn marks that stayed on the Warrior's armor whenever it regenerated just didn't make sense.

Chapter 31. The Border Between A Monster And A Hero

“Hah... Hah...!”

Godspeed’s face began to show fear and stress. So this is the time when he begins to suffer from the side effects of his power... I suppose there was no way to use such a power without paying the proper price for it.

Accelerator looked at his subordinate’s face once, and tightly gripped onto the blades in his hand.

Paah!

Eight blades shot at the Warrior.

Baaang!

Multiple explosions went off at once, as bits of meat flew everywhere. Burnt armor fell to the ground just a moment later. Godspeed, who was sighing in relief at this point, couldn’t help but widen his eyes at what he saw next.

“Hah... Hah... Huh...?”

It didn’t even take a second. There were no signs of regeneration

whatsoever. The Warrior “just seemed to be there from the start”. It was evident that the Warrior’s body had been destroyed to pieces just a moment before, but the man was standing in place casually as if nothing had happened.

“Just... Hah...! Fu... No way...!”

Godspeed was panting to himself with his hands on his knees. Accelerator came up to him and pulled him backwards.

“Get over here and stand behind me, assistant.”

“Hah... Hah... I’m not...”

“Just rest.”

Godspeed barely managed to nod as he moved back. By the looks of things, it looked like he exhausted himself completely after three minutes of using his power. The two had showered the Warrior with attacks, but in the end, they were the ones to become exhausted. The Warrior didn’t attack, but just looked at the two people silently. Almost as if he was telling them to give up.

Godspeed recovered his breath and turned towards Accelerator.

“Wow... Phew, now what? It really didn’t work.”

“I told you it won’t work on him. Why did you have to be so

stubborn? Your suggestions never work damn it.”

“How’s all this my fault?”

Accelerator raised his feet, as if he was trying to kick Godspeed for speaking out, but ended up grabbing his back instead.

“Ow, ouch ouch ouch. My back’s killing me. Just bring out the soldiers to deal with him. He’s going easy on us anyway.”

“Does it matter? The guy isn’t dying.”

“He’s immortal, but he must have a limit as well. He’ll die at some point.”

Godspeed nodded, and raised his hands up in the air. He was calling for the Second Subjugation Battalion.

Shf, shhf!

Teleporters and speedsters began to appear around the Warrior. The speedsters took out their weapons and shot them straight at the Warrior. Each of these projectiles were enforced with the powers that these soldiers had, allowing them to reach speeds well above that of sound. Only then did the Warrior find that the situation was a little more dire than before.

“Imagine Citadel!”

The air was bending around the Warrior and a sphere of prismatic light surrounded him.

So it's here...

The miracle of the Warrior that could only be invoked once a day. It was a barrier that would protect a group of people for one whole minute. He probably activated this in order to prepare himself for battle. Each time the weapons hit the barrier, it let off a powerful burst of energy that impacted the buildings below. The heat generated from it was enough to turn the stone floor underneath them into lava. But the Warrior didn't take any damage whatsoever. He simply sat in his barrier, casually activating each and every one of his spellstones.

[Metallic Organs] – Surrounds the organs with a metallic barrier to protect it.

[Virtual Skeleton = Physical Frame] – A spell is cast upon the spine. It creates a physical barrier that can act in place of the skeleton. In other words, it recreates the skeleton with mana. It protects the bones with mana. The strength of this barrier is enough to withstand a hit from a dragon.

[The Protection of The Fae = Sylphid Blessing] – Protects the

eyes from substances like dust, and blocks lethal gases or projectiles. It also allows the user to transmit distant messages.

Because he's perpetually under the blessing of [Dragon Blood], one might as well say that he's under four blessings at the moment. The Warrior didn't seem to think that this was enough, however, seeing that he was downing a potion as well. He was drinking it now, as the potion wouldn't activate as soon as one drank it. The saint and Necro confirmed the Warrior's use of the spellstones. Then they nodded to each other.

Pshhh-Chichichi!

The second barrier was cast, and the Warrior's blessings were all nullified.

"This is...?"

The Warrior didn't seem to have expected anything like this to happen. He just stood in his place, fumbling around with the spellstones in his hand.

Five seconds left now.

[Imagine Citadel] disappeared, and a wave of projectiles shot at the Warrior once again.

Tudadada!

The Warrior turned into mush from the unavoidable attack. Even as a powerful hero, it seemed difficult for him to go up against so many ability users at once.

“The way I see it, you just need to burn him. There’s no way he’d revive if we burn away all of his cells, right?”

The giant sword that the user of High Speed threw was accelerated by Accelerator, which caused the weapon to move at a velocity of mach 25.

Ka-bam!

The weapon left a streak of red light as it traveled through the air, causing a massive explosion upon contact with the ground.

Kugagagaga!

The scale of the explosion could be felt even where we were, three kilometers away from the battlefield. The saint had a worried expression as she watched the battle using my Floating Eye.

“As expected, it isn’t working.”

The man wasn’t dying. No matter what they were doing, he didn’t die. [Memento Mori] was a high-leveled power. Strength no

longer affected a power like this. It was something closer to a puzzle at this point.

“Prepare yourselves. We’ll need to move out the moment [Death Eye] fails.”

Necro asked me a question in a nervous tone of voice when I said this.

“Can I trust you?”

“I told you, didn’t I? ‘You can’t kill the Warrior’. That’s how it goes.”

Necro probably knew already.

“If the Warrior’s body was something that possessed regenerative properties, you could just get rid of the energy he contains by killing him over and over again. But as you might’ve seen already, part of the air and the mana around him constantly gets absorbed by him every time he dies.”

He might die sometime at this rate. Problem was, no one knew how long it would take. A thousand years... A million years... There was just no telling how long this might go for. It’s been just five minutes since the battle started. It might seem short, but for the ability users, it was extremely stressful for them already. And...

[He won’t die, no matter what you do.] As time passed, more and

more began to realize this. This began to shake the hearts of the soldiers in the field.

“Hey! What are you doing! It’s dangerous!”

“I’m telling you, just throwing shit won’t do anything!”

A select few of the soldiers began attempting to attack the Warrior with melee attacks. This prevented the others from being able to use projectile weapons. Accelerator tried to stop the soldiers from doing this, but ended up stopping himself.

“Well, this is annoying. It’s not like they’d get caught by him, but still...”

What he was concerned with was the deployment was the [Hundred Eight Eyes]. At a time like this, when their safety wasn’t guaranteed, it was extremely risky to deploy them to deal with the Warrior. The Storm was currently beating down the Warrior one-sidedly, but this in itself was a problem. Killing someone who never dies over and over again breaks something in one’s head. It breaks the ‘heart’ that a person possesses. Seeing how the Warrior recovers a second after having his head broken changes something in a soldier’s mind. It eats away at the soldier’s personality.

Those with low tolerance to death would throw up, and others would begin to smile in joy. To them, the Warrior was no longer a human. As more and more time passed, the state of the battle changed into something entirely different instead.

—A play.

The soldiers no longer used their full power. They treated the Warrior as something akin to a target. At one point, this was the person who had taken down the Demon King with the hero. Taking down someone like this was giving the soldiers a certain sense of ecstasy.

‘I’m amazing.’

‘My power is stronger than his.’

These soldiers were, in the end, normal people who managed to awaken to their abilities in a different world. Their current state of battle gave them a huge sense of satisfaction and catharsis. And their arrogant act, in the end, managed to bring out the Warrior’s anger.

“...It, looks like, I’m being looked. Down on. Really looked, down upon..”

The warrior almost sighed out his words but widened his arms to the side. He died several times more in the process, but this didn’t stop him.

“No matter how fast mosquitos may be, they are simply mosquitos in the end. Just bugs.”

It was slow. At least, to the human eye it was. The Warrior

brought his two hands together.

A clap...?

Right. It was a simple clap. One slow enough to be seen by the human eye. But the result of this was...

Kii-!

“Urk!”

The saint frowned as she put her hands over her ears. My body was vibrating from the shockwave. A sound loud enough to rip apart the area shook through the town, causing the soldiers nearby to moan in pain. If it's this bad here, over there in the battlefield must be...

“Kaah...!”

“My eyes...!”

The soldiers that had been mocking the Warrior just a moment ago were bleeding from their orifices. Seeing how their eyes had turned white, it seemed that they had suffered from burns as well.

“Aerodynamic heating, huh...”

“○○○○...?”

“Can’t hear.”

The saint waddled over my way, and put her hands over my ears. They immediately turned warm.

“Aerodynamic heating...?”

“Yes, aerodynamic heating.”

The saint spoke a little angrily when I intentionally stopped myself there.

“Shouldn’t you be explaining around now?”

“It’s the heating of a solid object produced by its high speed in the air. It can be commonly observed on space shuttles and fighter jets.”

The saint listened to me carefully, then stood up with a worried face.

“Where are you going?” “Where do you think you’re going?”

The saint gripped onto her pants after hearing me and Necro’s question, and replied quietly.

“The injured...”

It almost sounded like she herself didn't know what to do. Necro frowned, seemingly bothered by that tone of hers.

“Don't be ridiculous. Sit. The injured will come when they feel that they need you.”

His words made sense. I backed up his words.

“I'm against having healers going into the battlefield as well. It'd be better to leave the injured to be transported here by the teleporters.”

The saint thought for a moment, then sat back down. Her actions had no finesse whatsoever. She didn't care when her clothes and hair got dirty from the dirt as well. It was almost as if she was taken by something. She balled herself up, and watched the battlefield silently.

We were sharing our vision using the floating eye. So far, there was just one person who got killed by the Warrior's counterattack. Eight were injured, and the rest managed to escape by moving away faster than sound. The teleporters immediately came to recover the patients. The soldiers who had been surprised by the Warrior's counterattack began to get together, and started to buzz about what he had said moments before.

“Didn’t he say something just now?”

“He called us mosquitos, right?”

These weren’t the type to just take an insult like this. To them, the Warrior was nothing but a ‘stepping stone’. To them, they still had the upper hand.

The battle between the Warrior and the speedsters resumed. Except this time, the soldiers became more violent, and even more cruel.

Chapter 32. Hundred Eight Eyes

A bottle of powerful acid exploded on the Warrior's face, melting it off immediately. At the same time, one of the soldiers blasted the Warrior's stomach with a machine gun. It wasn't an effective attack by any means, but it was still quite humiliating.

“Hey, sandbag! Speak up will you?”

“What the hell happened to the confidence from before?”

The soldiers responded to the Warrior's provocations by provoking the Warrior themselves. No matter how powerful the Warrior was, there was no way he'd be able to catch ability users moving faster than sound. Plus, whenever he was about to catch one of them in his hand, a teleporter quickly appeared to snatch them away. It really was an unfair game of tag—

But the ones who were getting tired were the members of the Second Subjugation group. They tried splitting up into groups to take turns in their little game, but the stress simply kept piling higher and higher. This was the price they paid for using their powers without stopping.

“Ahh!”

In this world, nothing was free. When one of the teleporters messed up the timing of the teleport, a speeder got caught by the Warrior. It was the slowest member of the Storm, a user of the

ability known as [Steel Legs]. The Warrior had caught this soldier's shoulder. No, perhaps that was too light a term. The man's shoulder was 'squeezed' just like a tomato, spilling the red contents inside everywhere. Bits of flesh managed to poke their way out between the Warrior's fingers due to the shattered bones. It was impossible to use a power without being able to focus. The injury that the soldier had received wasn't lethal, but it was enough to make him shake uncontrollably from shock. The man widened his eyes at the Warrior's next attack.

–A flick.

The Warrior flicked one of his fingers, as if he was trying to show that he didn't need to do anything fancy to kill a man.

Pssh!

The top half of the soldier disintegrated into the air. The bottom half of the body fell on the ground, spilling out blood and guts in the process.

“Do you still want to continue?”

The Warrior shook the blood off of his right hand.

“You should stop before there are any more casualties. There's no way in hell you'd be able to beat me.”

The members of Storm were unable to respond to the Warrior's

arrogant words. Deep down, they had all understood what the Warrior was saying was the truth.

“Everyone, move back.”

Accelerator pulled back the people of Storm. Fighting at a time like this would just end up increasing the casualties. He needed to find a different solution.

“Velocity, Gearshift, and Retardation. Use these powers to hold back the Warrior.”

There was a need to stop the Warrior from being able to move in order to make full use of the Hundred Eight Eyes. The three people who used these powers all raised their hands in the air. Blue electricity arced above their heads to form a crown of light. It was a phenomenon that occurred whenever one used their power. The Warrior became slower than ever before as a result of this.

“Get ready!”

The Hundred Eight Eyes stepped out of the trenches in order to get ready for teleportation. Death Eye appeared last, yawning as he slowly stepped out of the trench.

“It’d be good for you to take off your bandage now.”

Death Eye smirked at my remark.

“Ah~ what the hell is this idiot saying? I’ll do fine on my own, so you mind your own business, yeah?”

I thought he’d say that. But the reason why I still told him this was because of how impractical his bandages seemed. It practically screamed,

‘I’m a user of a demon eye. Taking off this bandage would mean that I’d use my power against you, so please be warned.’

There was no need to hide the eye with a bandage, as powers were something that could be turned on and off whenever the user desired. In the case of demon eyes, the power simply happened to be cast through the organ known as the eye.

The members of the Hundred Eight Eyes all got on the shadow of the Shadow Jumper, and disappeared. The area became quiet again. Compared to the battlefield down below, this place was far too peaceful.

“The boy’s too arrogant. He’s trusting his abilities far too much.”

Necro said this as soon as the boy disappeared. It seemed that he was holding himself back a little to avoid conflict at a time like this.

“Aren’t you going to join in, Necro?”

“Why would I? Didn’t you say yourself that nothing was going to work on this guy? I think so too. That beast isn’t something that can be killed by an equation this simple. Well, I suppose it’s more like trying to solve an English question with a sword?”

“That’s how king Alexander the Great solved his question.”

“That’s not solving the question. The man just ripped apart the test itself. Are you kidding me? Destroying a cube because you couldn’t solve it isn’t ‘solving’ it. You of all people should know that.”

I didn’t respond to Necro’s words but instead looked up into the sky.

The first requirement was cleared-.

The sky was beginning to turn cloudy. It was getting extremely dark in this place, but the time was still just 2:16PM. I had confirmed that the saint’s magic had worked, and went over my plans for the twenty eighth time. This plan should work flawlessly if the Warrior is indeed a hero as the stories say. But this plan still doesn’t yield a success rate of a hundred percent, which lead me to create a plan B for an alternate scenario. By the time I was reviewing plan C, the members of the Hundred Eight Eyes finished getting into their positions. The demon eye users were all standing on the rooftops of buildings, staring down at the Warrior below.

The Warrior spun around, observing the sight laid out before him, and smiled.

“So this is your trump card.”

All the teleporters had already retreated, and the Warrior was still tied down in his place due to the soldiers of Storm restricting him.

“You’ve brought quite a lot of people, just for me.”

He still seemed extremely calm. At this rate, the demon eyes would kill him in an instant... Could it be that he doesn’t know about the Death Eye? I had thought that he’d know the Death Eye, considering how he knew the Accelerator, but maybe that wasn’t the case. Or could it be that he’s confident that the Death Eye wouldn’t affect him? The Warrior pulled out a long object from his pouch. It was a horn that was inscribed with some Hebrew, and was decorated with a swirling pattern. It was reddish in color, and it was curved in on itself like a spiral.

[Demon Horn = Corinth] – Rank: B+

– Stabbing this horn into one’s head would amplify the user’s ability by 33~57 times the norm for sixty seconds. The user dies after use.

It was an item that was pretty much made for the Warrior. Any normal human would die after a minute of its use, but the Warrior was able to use the item endlessly.

“Are you stupid? It’s too late for you to use something like that.”

The demon eye users unsealed their eyes as Death Eye mocked the Warrior. There were forty seven different kinds of eyes here. The light that shined from these eyes began to light up the darkened island. A cross-shaped light began to spread across the dark. Death Eye lifted his arm to give the Warrior a middle finger.

“Die, trash.”

The demon eyes all activated at once. But the Warrior had managed to stick the horn inside himself a second faster.

Tch! Chichichi! Crack!

Was it because so much energy became condensed in one place? The place where the Warrior was in just moments before was now just a black hole that was crackling with energy. The hole quickly sucked in the air around it, and spat out black lightning all around itself. Something was strange. It was almost like the ball of energy’s converging in on itself, instead of exploding outwards...

Pachi! Pachichi! Chichi-

The black lightning that arced out of the hole lessened in size the more time passed, and the sounds it was making had lessened as well.

This is a little bit strange...

I carefully looked at the members of the Hundred Eight Eyes. They were all carefully looking at the smoke that was generated by their attacks.

“Holy shit...!”

“He survived?!”

It seems that they’ve confirmed the Warrior’s survival. When the smoke fully dissipated to reveal the Warrior, Death Eye shouted in shock.

“No way! My demon eye...!”

–Didn’t work.

Chapter 33. Demonized

A red shadow of a person could be seen from within all the waves of heat. The area of attack had nothing left in it anymore other than dust, but the actual target had no scratches on himself whatsoever. This was the Warrior's trump card.

Demonization.

The Warrior had turned inhumanly powerful, and his appearance seemed to indicate that all by itself. His body was covered in metallic scales, and between each of it were strings of muscle fibers shining inside. His skin didn't just become stronger, it completely fused with his armor. The horn that was stuck on his forehead had merged into the Warrior's steely mask, turning silver in color.

“Last chance. Run.”

The Warrior's voice now had a husky-like undertone to it. The only impression one could get from his words was that he was absolutely set on annihilating the enemy.

“Ugh...!!”

The aura on the Warrior was able to make the soldiers around him back off in fear. Death. If they didn't run, death would await them. They began to look back and forth, not knowing what to do. The ability users that had been attacking confidently just a

moment ago were starting to look back as well. Their attacks had all been nullified. There were no idiots here that would be willing to expend even more energy to attack someone immortal. Well, there was one.

“That bastard must’ve cheated!”

Death Eye screamed this at the Warrior with eyes that could kill.

“Just watch! I’m going to go full power this time!”

The boy was throwing a tantrum. He completely ignored his comrades, and used all the strength he could muster. A crown of light appeared above his head as a grey ripple spread across the entire village.

The Warrior just watched. The boy had a cheat ability that was able to kill anyone with just a glance, the Death Eye. Due to this, he must’ve seen himself as the main character of a world like this. And here, for the first time, he encountered someone who denied his entire existence, or rather, power.

“Uoohhhh!”

No one stopped him. The soldiers watched the boy with eyes filled with hope.

“Try blocking this, you son of a bitch!”

The Death Eye was shining brighter than any demon eye deployed on the field now. He really was using all his power. The intensity of his power was enough to make the onlookers squint. But...

The Warrior, who was taking on the Death Eye all by himself, acted as if he was basking under the sun. The earth under him turned to dust, and the air turned black, but he was still motionless. At the point when his footing had disappeared, the Warrior was standing like a nail stuck in its place above the ground.

“—Hah.”

The boy let out a light sigh. With this, the area around the Warrior changed in an instant. The distorted space around the Warrior rippled quietly, and the black air inside it disappeared in an instant.

Does the Warrior's body become dictated by a different set of laws while he's demonized? Or maybe he truly becomes invincible during that time...

In any case, the Warrior wasn't someone that was affected by Death Eye at this point. The boy scrunched up his face when he saw that his attack hadn't gotten through at all.

“Eh? Ah? Why am I, crying...?”

The price he paid for this attack was brutal. Death Eye saw that his eyes were crying tears of blood, and fell forwards. His small body silently slid off the roof of the house he was on. Demonic Walker managed to catch him right before he fell, but his body was devoid of any life already.

The saint closed her eyes.

“First, it’s hostages, and now it’s children...!”

The saint whimpered under her breath.

“Were the soldiers of Haze such despicable trash?”

Everyone took a step back in fear.

Whooosh!

A cold wind blew. I responded a second too late as I realized that this was something that was caused by the Warrior.

[——] Beast Roar was cast into the sky. The thunderous roar shattered all of the windows in the area. The people near the Warrior began to bleed from their orifices as they fell powerlessly onto the ground.

A few wet themselves as they lost control of their lower body.

The Warrior's roar was originally developed to intimidate beasts, but against humans, the roar in itself was an attack. He must've used this assuming that the citizens of the town had been evacuated already. The Warrior lifted his hands up into the air. A transparent cube appeared in front of them.

“Double Arms, stand by.”

The optic camouflage turned off to reveal a black object.

[Mobile Logistics = Olgograd] – Rank: B

– A storage device applied with gravity manipulation. Because it is in a different dimension, it is impossible to touch it unless you are the owner. It becomes materialized when it releases weapons. It is capable of storing weapons of up to 3.6 tonnes in weight.

Must be like a sort of a drone-like golf bag that follows the user around. Except that instead of golf clubs, the device holds weapons.

Chii-, clack, clunk.

Handles of several different weapons appeared as the device opened up. When the Warrior stuck out his hands into the device, two swords extended out.

[Sword Monster] The shining black blades revealed itself to the world.

“It’s been a while.”

Unlike most sword hilts, the hilts of the Sword Monster were wide and thick. They didn’t seem like something that could really be grabbed by anyone, but the Warrior managed to grab onto it easily. His hands sunk in slowly into the hilt. It seemed to be made of liquid metal. Once the Warrior’s hands became one with the sword hilts, he pulled out one of the blades from the device.

2.3 meters long in length. Density was unable to be measured.

“I didn’t think there’d ever be a day where I’d have to swing this again... So the war hasn’t ended yet?”

His voice was filled with remorse. The Warrior pulled out the other sword from the device. Strangely enough, this sword didn’t have a guard on it. But right after it was pulled out of Olgorad, a strange cube appeared above the handle of the sword.

Beep, beep, beep.

The cube began to spin as it constantly changed forms. From its movement, I could see that the cube was made to “cut what could be cut, and smash what couldn’t be cut”. I could see why. There must be quite a lot of beasts with hides tougher than stone in a

world like this. Cutting things like those would damage the sword to no end. The Warrior must've crushed beasts like these with the cube above the hilt. The sword itself was long and thick. The blade had countless teeth on it that shifted and changed in size like a living being.

It really was a weapon made to kill. As long as a weapon like this was active, wizards couldn't even join the fight. The sword would disrupt the mana to the point where it rendered the ability to use mana meaningless. It was quite a bit like jamming, it prevented wizards from being able to connect to their god.

“You monster...!!”

A brave ability user ran at the Warrior.

Kii!

The moment the Warrior swung his sword, my sight was filled with static. Looks like his sword affected my eye. I positioned the eye higher up in the air, outside the range of the sword.

The Warrior had just managed to cut and crush the person who had approached him to a pulp. The speed of the sword was already well above that of the members of the Storm at this point. Those who thought that they'd be safe as long as they were outside the range of the sword were shattered by the sword being flung at them by the Warrior. At this point, the battle was just the military's struggle for survival.

The Warrior massacred everyone around him, whether they held weapons in their hands or not. He had given them enough chances already. The first to go were the demon eye users. Without the assistance from teleporters and speedsters, they were unable to run from the Warrior's attacks. At this point, to them, the Warrior must've looked more monster than human.

A minute passed.

The demonization ended, and the Warrior returned to his previous state with black smoke coming off of him. So reusing the item instantly was impossible, huh. In any case, to think he'd have a face like that right after using Corinth...

He overexerted his body for a full minute. He pretty much used up 60 year's worth of life energy in 60 seconds, but he didn't even seem a bit tired...

It's as I thought.

The Warrior returned the horn to his pouch, and began to target the weaker soldiers.

"Gaah!"

The soldiers began to fire at him desperately, but the bullets just bounced off him. Whenever the Warrior moved, the scenery changed, and dust flew everywhere. Whenever he swung his sword, people exploded, and pieces of meat flew everywhere.

He looked like he was flowing, like water. His flow was unceasing, and endless. It wasn't 'hard' like bringing up a sword right after a strike. His twin swords cut across an enemy in an x-shape, and slowly moved upwards to draw an infinity sign.

He almost looked like a conductor of an orchestra.

Whenever he struck downwards, he would begin to spin like a sawblade, and the moment he got back on his foot, he would start on a mittelhau without even a moment of delay. My ears became filled with the sound of a jet engine's roar. His constant sword swings made it almost seem like he was a living storm. At a speed like this, it didn't even matter whether his sword strikes hit or not, the air would do all the work for him.

This wasn't an attack that really thought of the enemy's attack at all. The Warrior just kept walking. This was only possible because of his invincibility. The other side has to consider their possibility of death in a fight, but the Warrior only has to focus on attacking.

The standard rules of swordfighting did not apply to the Warrior at all. He was akin to a spinning windmill of death that killed with just a scratch. Blocking the Warrior's sword would end up breaking the weapon. And the weaponless enemy would be torn apart by the Warrior.

–Amazing.

Even if one manages to attack the Warrior successfully, Sword

Monster would manage to rip the person apart immediately. Unless one was an immortal just like the Warrior, defeat was inevitable. The enemy would have no choice but to retreat, as they would die when they blocked, or when they attacked. It would be hard to deflect an attack like this as well. Even if one manages to deflect once, the shock from doing so would get the person killed. The only way to survive in this situation is to have even more strength than the Warrior, but at this point, that wasn't possible.

But... Was it possible to win with just greater strength? The Warrior was someone who managed to battle himself through hordes of monsters. Monsters that were faster, stronger, and bigger than humans.

The Warrior managed to win against all these monsters.

“How about this?!”

One of the teleporters had managed to teleport a retired warship with him. 115m in length, 14m in width. The giant warship began to fall towards the town. The soldiers below looked up at the sky that had just gone dark.

“Mad. Absolutely mad.”

The Warrior pulled his arms back behind him as he looked straight up at the warship.

Crack, creak–

His muscles began to expand. The attack that followed had enough strength behind it to bend space around him.

Slash!

The ship was split into four pieces. The pieces began to separate, revealing the insides of the ship.

Bang! Bang! Baang!

The earth shook as the pieces hit the ground. The Warrior had managed to slice a 3000 tonne steel ship into four pieces without even touching it. At this point, the Warrior seemed like the strongest person in the world. If he was just strong, it would be possible to somehow neutralize him with Storm, but he wasn't a hero for nothing. He had experience, sense, and talent with the sword.

In front of such overwhelming power, it was useless to attempt to trap him or trick him. Now, the ability users were all trying to run. A fraction of them tried to fight back, but most didn't last more than a second against him. That was obvious. Not only did the Warrior have more experience, he also had built up the basics differently. On the surface, it seemed that he was focused only on the strongest sword strikes, but in reality he was all about the "flow" of the sword. His dance of death silenced all that was in front of it.

Cut, burn, destroy!

His skill of maintaining a one step one stroke rule as he pressured the enemies in front of him just went to show how skilled he was with the sword.

As expected of the Sword Dancer—.

There was no falsity in his title. As the Warrior who stood on the top of the world, he was a dominating hero. There were no longer people who tried to fight back. Instead, they were all trying to run away. Once this happened, the Warrior put back his swords into Olgorad, and pulled out a shield. It was an attack shield, the [Athaga]. The Warrior stuck the shield to the ground, and got into a running position. It was the skill that was said to have been used against giant groups of enemies, the [War God's Chariot = A Ra Hineta].

Kagagaga!

The war machine tore through the town like a jet. The ground was dug up by the charge, which began to be filled with blood.

“Not... yet...?”

The saint sounded pained. Why did she bother getting involved if she wasn't going to be able to take it...? She would've lived a much better life if she just focused on her well-being.

“I'd love it if you could begin now.”

There were enough clouds in the sky now. The saint immediately activated the rain magic.

The rain began to fall from the darkened sky. At first, it didn't seem like much, but the light drizzle soon turned into a raging storm. The Warrior's body was completely wet.

Preparations complete.

Now, it's my turn. I put on latex gloves, and checked my body's condition one last time.

0.2 seconds...

My body's reaction speed had improved, thanks to me preserving my arteries moments back. I had thought that a formaldehyde preservative would have a better conductivity of mana than clotted blood. I seemed to have been correct. I took a look at the saint who was casting the rain magic. I could see rain drops on her eye, despite the fact that she was protected under an umbrella. In the end, she was just a child. She must've been quite shocked.

"Necro, preparations on your end?"

"Yeah, it's done. You think this'll really work?"

Necro still sounded unsure.

“I told you how it works, didn’t I?”

“You did, but...”

“Just make everyone stay away from the waters.”

“I told them to do that, but didn’t they all complain? Saying that there was no way something as stupid as that would work.”

Not many things in this world had absolute certainty. I, myself, didn’t think that this plan had a 100% chance of succeeding. But.

“We’ll have to try to find out.”

I activated Heart of Gold.

Chapter 34. The Price For Immortality

The skill that I was about to buy was [A Thousand Thunderbirds].

[A Thousand Thunderbirds] – Rank: C+

– Summons a thousand birds made of lightning. It is possible to control these birds within a range of 10km. It is possible to tune the amount of electricity in the birds, and the skill can only be used once a day.

I left all my equipment to the bank, and was loaned 83,000,000 dollars. I immediately used the money to buy the skill. My body was enveloped in blue light, and I became able to use my new ability. Of course, I couldn't kill the Warrior with just this. It only existed to persuade and talk to the Warrior. I activated the ability, and sent the birds flying up to the sky. The birds turned into blue streaks of lightning, and disappeared into the clouds.

This really is worth its money.

I took a look into the village with the floating eye, just to make sure if someone hadn't evacuated yet. The survivors at this point were four speedsters, seven teleporters, and eight hundred soldiers. There were pitifully little compared to before. They must've never expected that they'd be pushed back to this point by the Warrior. I took up my white flag and descended down the hill.

The town was a smoldering mess. I could see corpses lying everywhere in the streets, with plumes of black smoke rising everywhere. I could hear gunshots every once in a while, but the sounds soon faded. Right now, my distance from the Warrior was 1km. I closed my eyes for a second, and became enveloped in the rain. Water bounced off of my face. When I opened my eyes, I could see a giant force of violence standing in front of me. Two giant swords were put against my neck, as if it was about to tear me to pieces at any moment. The Warrior looked at the white flag in my hand, and narrowed his eyes.

“What kind of trick are you planning on pulling this time?”

I knew exactly what he meant by this. If I answered wrong, I’d be turned to mush immediately. The man was far stronger than me, and I had no power to fight back. Here, I needed to draw out his curiosity, instead of surrendering.

“Hold on. I’m not about to attack. I just want to give something to you.”

I took out a protein pack from the vault. I had prepared this earlier in the event that a situation like this should arise. The Warrior looked at me dumbfoundedly, then put his swords down on the ground to receive my gift.

“...Where did you get this?”

“I have an internet shopping ability. I can buy anything from our

previous world as long as I have the cash. I can get it to be delivered anywhere I want it to as well.”

By telling him about my ability, I fulfilled the second condition. If someone who didn't know about my plans saw this, he'd think I was a fool for revealing my ability to him. I took a look at my wristwatch and continued talking.

“It kind of works like this. Three, two, one...”

Eight boxes of water appeared to my right. The Warrior looked at the boxes silently.

“Get it now? How would I kill you with an ability like this? Let's talk.”

The Warrior was a hero of war. He wouldn't kill a person who approached him without a weapon. He is suspicious, but he is only cautious of my actions at this point. I took a look at the shallow wounds all over his body, and edited my theory about his power. The man didn't seem to feel pain. No matter how used to pain one was, being cut by a sword would make the person flinch in pain a little bit, but he didn't show any of that. At first, I thought he just didn't feel anything, but...

If that was the case, people around him would've noticed. It probably would've been recorded as well. His sense of touch was fine. Seeing how he immediately responded to attacks from Heat Eye, he was capable of feeling heat as well. If that was the case...

He didn't lose his senses. He lost the realness of life.

He was quite similar to me in that regard. The feeling of life as opposed to death didn't seem very different. You almost feel disconnected from reality. If this was the same for the Warrior, wounds must not matter to him as much. To him, it must be a lot like seeing his HP go down in a video game. In the same line of thought, the Warrior probably never became scared of a monster that came for him. Any normal person would lose strength in their legs and plop down on the ground, but the Warrior would be able to counterattack easily. This was his secret to staying alive in the battlefield.

“Ah, I almost forgot to ask. How does it feel to lose the ‘realness of living’ after becoming an immortal?”

Seeing the visible change in the Warrior's expression led me to believe that my theory was indeed correct.

“The cost of your power is the happiness in life, isn't it? Your power must be more like a curse than anything.”

The Warrior tried to feign an emotionless face.

“I don't understand what you're trying to get at. So what? Get to the main idea. Do you just want to stall for time so that the soldiers can escape?”

“If you want to kill more of them, go ahead. I'm not at all

interested in the lives of others.”

Saying this should stop the Warrior’s movements for a bit. Killing more at this point would just get him marked as a brutal murderer. The Warrior probably understood my implications.

“I just want you to listen to my story. You’re immortal anyway, right? Spare me some of that time of yours.”

After thinking for a second, the Warrior let out a mocking laugh.

“Why would I?”

I bit down on my e-cigarette. The thunderbirds, each of them carrying a charge of 10mA, immediately began to stream down towards the earth at the speed of light.

Chichichi!

The rainwater began to conduct the electricity. The Warrior seemed to have tried to resist the electricity for a second, then fell down like a log once the second thunderbird hit the water. Unlike him, I was wearing rubber boots, which allowed me to stay unshocked. This is why you should be careful of telephone poles during monsoon season... Tsk, tsk.

“Do you know how the muscles move?”

I looked down at the twitching Warrior, and put the e-cigarette between my fingers.

“Let’s say that this cigarette is myosin filament, the string of protein that forms the muscles in the body.”

I lessened the distance between my fingers slowly.

“As the actin filament inside the myosin filament begins to move, muscle contracts. This phenomenon can be recreated with a little bit of electricity as well.”

In 1780, an Italian Biologist with the name of Luigi Galvani discovered that an electric shock to a frog’s legs could cause the leg to contract. The situation wasn’t really different here, except that this time I was using a live human instead of a frog.

“It doesn’t matter how strong you became. You are still an organism. You might be able to stop bullets, but not electricity.”

The Warrior’s high magic resistance only allowed him to resist a little more electricity than others.

Chichichichi!

An electric bird struck the Warrior’s body again. I looked down at the Warrior silently for a second before continuing to talk.

“‘Once you die, the cause of death is eliminated.’ In other words, ‘As long as you don’t die, status effects will continue to be in effect.’”

Freezing current. Once an electric current over 60mA shocks the body, the nerves become paralysed. This would happen to the Warrior with an electric current at 110mA.

I thought of the conversation I had with Necro and the saint two days ago.

“This magic resistance thing... If it raises resistance towards heat and electricity, wouldn’t the term be a mistranslation? Instead of magic resistance, it should be...”

I couldn’t really think of anything. The full definition of it would be ‘resistance towards various attacks such as fire, electricity, and poison except kinetic energy.’ A thick armor might be able to block an arrow, but not fire. This is where magic resistance comes into play. Being able to block the arrow would be the defense stat, and the ability to block flames would be magic resistance.

“The reason why they’re using such a term is because it’s a word that people are used to seeing. After all, everyone’s played a game at least once in their life.”

Necro nodded.

“The theory of it is correct. Electricity still works when you have

high magic resistance. You just feel it less. But the thing is, how much would it work on the Warrior? His body's different from the average man's, you know. His body might be completely resistant to electricity."

The saint immediately shot this idea down.

"His bioelectricity would be completely messed up, then. His nerve center would become completely messed up and he'd start getting palpitations."

"Like a person whose pacemaker's been broken?"

"Would a training to raise magic resistance lead to such drastic changes in the body?"

"But... If that were the case, wouldn't demon eyes work on him?"

I answered that question.

"Of course it'd work. But if it's too powerful, he'd die. If he dies, he revives. Once he becomes 'reset', he would temporarily become immune to the cause of death. Only then would the 'immortality' work."

Necro and the saint both popped a question mark over their heads. Their use of the Oracle really was...

“Think about it. Invincibility and immortality don’t have the same definitions, correct?”

“Well... That’s obvious, isn’t it? They’re different words.”

The saint nodded to Necro’s comment. Do they still not get it...?

“If the Warrior was invincible, there wouldn’t be cases where he’d even get hurt. But he’s not invincible. He takes less damage thanks to his high defense stat, but there are records of him getting injured.”

I had read about this in the report.

“What happens when the Warrior becomes completely burnt? Can you call the pile of ash ‘alive’?”

The saint answered immediately.

“That would be... stretching the definition of life.”

“What about when his brain’s completely smashed? He can’t think. Can you still call him ‘alive’?”

The two were quietly listening now.

“The reason why immortality is called immortality is because the

Warrior revives after every critical wound. ‘In the end’, he’s still alive.”

This was the difference between invincibility and immortality.

“In other words, immortality completely relies on the results. If he doesn’t die at all, you’d have to call him invincible, not immortal. If I tried to make this even easier to understand...”

I began to draw in the air using the Oracle.

1. A person who got stabbed by a spear in the head.

If this person was invincible, this case wouldn’t have happened in the first place. However, immortality is not invincibility. Because immortals can still suffer from damage, the spear would still go through the head. The person with immortality would be stabbed in the head, and die. This would be ‘death.’ Why? Because his brain turned to mush.

“It’s not that you don’t die because you’re immortal. You die for a very short period of time, then revive. If you’re not invincible, you have to go through this process at some point.”

The two let out exclamations of understanding at my drawings.

“Mr. Murderer, you’re super bad at drawing.”

“Thought it was drawn by an elementary schooler. Damn.”

I frowned, and drew my second picture.

2. A person who fell after being stabbed in the head by a spear.

The saint smiled mockingly at me. I ignored her, and asked my question.

“...What would the person do to recover from this situation?”

“He’d remove the spear. Ah...!”

Necro seemed to understand.

“You get it, then? That ‘the cause of death’ gets removed?”

For immortality to work, it would have to remove the cause of death for the user, be it a spear, poison, fire, or anything else. In other words–.

‘As long as you feed enough electricity into his body to keep him paralyzed, even though he’s not dead, it’s possible to restrain the Warrior.’

But of course, this wasn't something that would continue forever. I could only use this ability once every day, and I couldn't kill the Warrior with an ability like this.

I was just warning him. I was warning him that if he wasn't willing to listen, I would continue to restrain him. The Warrior looked at me with hateful eyes from the ground. How scary.

"I know, I know. I can only hold you down in this state, and once you die from lack of air, you'd revive. But... aren't you curious about how long I could do this to you?"

The electricity in the village disappeared. The thunderbirds would wait inside the clouds. The rain began to dissipate slowly. The ability users appeared above the rooftops to watch me and the Warrior. Did their curiosity surpass their fear of death? Steam rose from the body of the Warrior. And a second later, deathly black killing intent began to rise out of the Warrior. The ability users nearby tensed up in fear.

Huff!

The Warrior let out a deep breath, and stood up without even twitching a muscle in his arms. He looked at me like a beast that was just about to lose control.

"I told you before. I'm only here to talk. You've fought enough already, haven't you?"

“Talk...?”

His rumbling voice was quite the scary thing. I'd probably get smashed like mud if he just swung his arm at me right now.

“Well, it would be a trade more than anything, or something like that?”

“...Fine. I'll listen to your last words. But, if you say anything boring, just know that I'll kill you.”

“Shouldn't that be a villain's line? Well, whatever. How was it? That feeling of just lying down on the ground like a dead body? Just because you don't feel the realness of life shouldn't mean that you don't feel the meaninglessness of it, right?”

Just like I did. The only fun I could have in life without realness was reading and talking. It must be the same for the immortal as well. What good was life if it wasn't fun? The Warrior thought for a second, then threatened me in a low voice.

“I could make you experience it right now.”

“Trying to solve everything with violence isn't ideal in the modern society, you know? And—”

It's time.

“Shit like that never works against nature.”

The Warrior made a confused face. I snapped my finger in response.

Kuoooooh! Kraaaaam!

The earth shook, and the volcano released a huge amount of steam.

“The volcano...!”

“At a time like this...?”

The ability users nearby looked at this with surprised faces. Of course, all this was ‘acting’ for me. If it’s possible to save a person’s life with lies, it must be easier to kill with it as well. Well, I’ll have to see if he would actually fall for a childish trick like this though.

Chapter 35. The Warrior And The Murderer

The Warrior raised his voice for the first time.

“What did you...!”

“What do you think would happen if the magma of the volcano comes in contact with the underground water?”

“Underground water...?”

“In professional terms, a phenomenon known as a hydrovolcanic eruption would occur. The body of water that the magma would come in contact with would turn into a gaseous state, increasing in volume rapidly. This would cause the volcano to erupt.”

Surprise appeared on his face for the first time. This was obvious. He must’ve dealt with many monsters in his life, but this probably was his first time dealing with nature.

Of course, I was bluffing.

It wasn’t that making the volcano explode wasn’t possible, but it just couldn’t be done at the moment with the tools at hand. I could only bluff the explosion. The Warrior let out a laugh after a moment of silence.

“.....Hah! Nice bluff.”

“Think carefully. You saw what my power was, didn’t you?”

I showed him my power just for this moment. Normally, it was extremely crucial that one did not tell others about his power. That wasn’t the case for Heart of Gold. In fact, it was beneficial for me to tell the Warrior about my power to confuse him.

“Heart of Gold. What I had ordered with this internet shopping ability was 1,500,000 gallons of water. This should make it possible for me to artificially create an eruption.”

Total cost of it was 1,000,000 dollars. It was enough water to fill a lake.

“Did you know? It’s possible to come inside this town right now, but you can’t exit once you enter.”

The only ones who could go outside were only a few of the teleporters.

“Our wizard created a barrier that’s impossible to destroy even by your standards. Well, there are exceptions, so I suppose there might be a case where you escape successfully.”

I gave him the option of being able to escape alone, with a low success rate.

“But if you ‘run away alone’, what would happen to the villagers stuck in the village? Their only path to escape, the bridge, is cut off. They might be sheltered inside a bunker at the moment, but you should know as well as I do that bunkers don’t do shit against magma. They’re stuck. They can’t escape.”

Would he humiliate himself by running away alone? Or would he become buried by the magma inside the village?

“You...! You’re dragging the villagers into this?!”

The Warrior glared at me with eyes filled with hate. To him, I was a villain who took the villagers hostage. But this time, the villain would win.

“As expected of a hero. You care more about the others rather than yourself.”

I thought of the saint when I mentioned the word hero. That pureness of hers was something that I’d never be able to attain. That made me want it even more.

“Don’t worry about it too much. You wouldn’t even be able to feel pain in the magma.”

“Kuh...! You...!”

The man didn’t come at me despite his rage. The word “deal” was holding him back.

“I came to a conclusion about your ability after observing it for quite some time. As long as you have Memento Mori, you won’t die. Even when you get dropped into magma.”

The man was close to being a perfect immortal.

“I thought of something at that point. If I can’t kill you, why don’t I just put you in a state where you’re basically dead?”

What was death? Despite having died, I was able to move in the real world, affecting other people in life. I would only be considered dead when I was unable to affect anyone in the world. A severance from society. A complete isolation from the world. This would be considered a form of death.

“The estimated volume of magma that is to erupt from Volcorr is 2,600km³. If you decide to keep fighting here, the villagers will all die. You’d be known as a coward who ran from battle. And you, too, would have to suffer within several thousand tonnes of magma for quite some time. Well, I suppose it doesn’t matter, considering you can’t feel much in life anymore anyway.”

He’d be able to survive somehow, but he couldn’t tolerate the results. Because he’s a hero.

“If you do something like that, then, you too would...!!”

“Me? I’m already dead.”

I took off my helmet for him to see. I looked into the Warrior's widened eyes, and lied to him.

“Please die for the sake of justice, Warrior.”

Humans were greedy things. They always made choices that benefited themselves. Where would the Warrior that couldn't feel the realness in life stand in this scale of life?

I didn't even need to see the answer.

He was a hero that cared more for others rather than himself. He would rather sacrifice his life rather than give up his honor.

The good was basically an act of sacrificing oneself for others. Good people would sacrifice themselves to save others. But was this the “right thing to do”...? As a failed product, I couldn't understand such a concept.

The Warrior thought for a second, then looked up at me with resolute eyes.

“If I die... Can the villagers live?”

The humans chose life, and the Warrior chose death. I could no longer see rage in the Warrior's determined face. Rather, I saw a hint of happiness in it.

“I promise.”

“I see... So this is the last time I’ll be able to see the sky.”

The Warrior looked up to the sky as he said this. The sky that was now devoid of clouds was bright blue. A hawk in the sky let out a screech. The Warrior took out Sword Monster from the ground, and gave me one of the swords.

“.....”

Talking any more at this point was useless. We both knew what we wanted. I took up the Sword Monster, and looked at the Warrior in the eyes. An exchange of sword strikes followed immediately after.

It was a traditional battle.

In order to allow the Warrior to have his last wish to fight till the end, I participated in this petty play. He swung his sword, but the swings no longer had the strength it had before. He was probably adjusting to my strength. Probably in order to test my sword skills. In the end, I had managed to put my sword through the Warrior.

“Very... Good.”

The Warrior stepped back, and kneeled. Unlike before, blood

pooled under him to form a small puddle.

“I suppose... I can rest now.”

It was silent. The audience became completely silent as they witnessed the death of the Warrior.

“Chrono. Vahn. Iris. Kamiyu.Morto.”

The Warrior uttered the name of his comrades. The adventurers he spent time with for five years.

“It was fun.”

The Warrior made a boyish smile, and closed his eyes.

*

How boring.

I confirmed that Romeo Smith had died by checking his status screen.

To think he'd call out the saint's name at the end...

I had suspected it before. A normal party would have a healer included in it, but I couldn't find any. The strongest white wizard

in the world probably got a request to join the hero's party at some point.

Well, whatever. I wasn't related to it anyway.

I pushed away the dead Warrior's body, and retrieved his equipment.

<Acquired [Changeling Armor = Hirganrel].>

<Acquired [Demon Horn = Corinth].>

<Acquired [Mouthless Monster = Sword Monster].>

<Acquired [Mobile Logistics = Olgorad(in 7)].>

The (in 7) probably meant that the tool contained seven weapons inside it.

<Acquired [Dragon Boots].>

<Acquired [Devourer Ring].>

The others...

I tried searching the body further, but couldn't find anything. Looks like they got destroyed in battle. I put all the items inside the vault, and checked the appraisal amount.

<Appraisal for [Hirganrel]: 389,000,000 dollars.>

<Appraisal for [Corinth]: 52,000,000 dollars.>

<Appraisal for [Sword Monster]: 36,000,000 dollars.>

<Appraisal for [Olgorad(in 7)]: 25,000,000 dollars.>

<Appraisal for [Dragon Boots]: 3,000,000 dollars.>

<Appraisal for [Devourer Ring]: 300,000 dollars.>

...The numbers that I got were quite peculiar. I tried checking again, but nothing had changed. In total, this was about 505,300,000 dollars.

“Hmm...”

Right. If items in video games could fetch a gigantic price, I

suppose items in real life would fetch a price of at least this much. I stood up, and bid farewell to Romeo's corpse.

[Immortality = Memento Mori].

Human, remember you must die.

So it came true, after all. The Warrior gave up on life. He denied his instincts to live. I suppose his death was an obvious conclusion then. I ripped off the white flag, and used it to cover his body.

Because it looked quite filthy in that state. Watching the flag slowly turn red was quite the sight.

“Amazing...!”

“He killed the monster all by himself...!!”

People began to flock my way.

“Something that not even the Death Eye could do...!”

“Who is he?”

“Those clothes are... the ones from the Special Task Force?”

I found familiar faces when I looked around me. To my left was Necro, and to my right was the saint. Unlike Necro, who had a huge grin on his face, the saint was looking down at the floor with a trembling body, as if she was absolutely terrified of something. She stiffened up as her gaze shifted to Romeo's body.

I could make out the emotion of self-loathing, and the denial of what had just happened on her face. If the price for immortality was the loss of realness to life, I wonder what the price for the saint's power would be? I changed my attention to look at the black emotions beginning to writhe among the people. The people's enraged gazes refused to get off the Warrior's bodies.

"Hoyung, Sugil, Hyunjung, Steven, Paeul, Frank, Diane, Sarah, Polini, Leonard, William, Jeanne, Anne..."

I uttered the name of the people who died that might've had a good relationship with the survivors. There was something I wanted them to do.

"There was no one here that deserved to die. But the Warrior, despite having killed all these people, would continue to be called a hero."

It didn't take much to change rage into killing intent. I walked over to the saint, and motioned the people to do whatever they wanted with the body.

Shouts and curses began to fill the area. Those with weapons

began to take their rage out on the one that was already dead.

Stab!

Before anyone could stop them, the Warrior's body was dirtied with sword wounds and various waste.

“Ah...!”

I stopped the saint from running forward.

“The Warrior mentioned your name. If you step out now, they'll think you were his comrade.”

I ignored my hand that was encased in holy flames, and kept talking.

“We all knew the Warrior was going to die. The Warrior feared death, but at the same time, he wished for it. I just pushed him a little bit.”

Some had something that they cherished more than life.

Others considered the loss of dignity and honor to be a fate worse than death.

And yet others had a wish they wanted to fulfill even at the cost

of their life.

“...Let me go.”

I let go of the trembling saint. Now, Romeo resembled something more akin to a smashed tomato. This was how the Warrior's story ended.

How comical.

I laughed silently at the mush of meat from behind the saint.

There were no hostages from the beginning. The villagers were taken out of the village from the very start. The only thing that was left here to die was an old dog that no one cared about.

Chapter 36. The Night of The Broken

The night of the Warrior's death was almost horrifyingly silent. The mission was a success, which called for a celebration, but I suppose that couldn't really be a thing with the amount of blood it took to achieve this. I stayed in the stables as usual, with a book in hand, until the saint came over to meet me with a body drenched in sweat.

“Mr. Murderer? So you were here after all.”

Something was off. But I really didn't care enough to find out more about it. Since I was born I had never taken interest in a person other than myself. Due to this, I wasn't very happy about the saint's surprise visit.

“The way to find the right answer?”

I answered her lazily as I kept reading.

“Who knows. It'd be different based on the problem at hand, wouldn't you think? The easiest method would be something close to the sieve of Eratosthenes. It's the easiest method of finding prime numbers. It's quite simple. You just net out the numbers that aren't prime numbers. You'll be left with the right answers by the end. Process of elimination works quite well.”

Because I could not kill, I loosened the definition of death. I tried putting the societal death as a form of death. The only reason why this plan succeeded was luck.

As a person who chose to die, I didn't have any particular desire to live. This "hero hunt" was only a form of entertainment for me. The saint stayed silent even when I was thinking all this.

This is why conversations were boring. The responses of others were extremely slow compared to my thought process. It almost felt like I was living in a world of water. I saw the saint open her mouth and realized that she was about to ask another question.

"If the Warrior didn't choose death... What were you planning to do? Were you actually going to erupt the volcano...?"

"Who knows? I couldn't even make the volcano erupt using the method I told him. I can't deliver things underneath the volcano."

If there was no empty space underground, the delivery wouldn't go through. Well, it's not like there was no way to make the volcano erupt, but still.

"Then... Would you have given up...?"

"No. The reason why magma explodes is because there's pressure building up from the inside. It doesn't even have to be pressure from under the magma. I just need to apply sudden pressure to the magma. If I wanted the volcano to explode, I wouldn't have even ordered water."

The level one ability of Heart of Gold already had infinite

possibilities. I could sink a ship by ordering a huge amount of goods on it, or I could destroy a building in a similar manner. I continued talking.

“This is all just a theory in the end. The volcano might not have even erupted back then, causing my plans to be jeopardized. But I just need to change the equation a little bit or use a different method when something like that happens. In fact, I don’t even need to cause the volcano to erupt.”

“...There was no need?”

I confessed everything to the frowning saint.

“I could’ve exploded a sector in the town with a bomb, then threatened the Warrior with the villagers. The result of this would’ve been the same. I just used the volcano for artistic value.”

“Just for that...”

Because I could, I did. That was all.

“‘Taking hostages’. There really are no better ways to kill heroes, don’t you think? People like the Warrior never hesitate to give their lives for other people. I don’t understand it myself, but I assume there’s some kind of logic involved with their line of thought. Well, but then again, they might not be thinking logically at all.”

“I see...”

The saint listened to me quietly, then declared something with a loud voice.

“I forbid you from taking hostages from now on.”

“...Why?”

It wasn't like I'd have any problems with that, but it didn't make sense. Even when I understood the thought process of the saint, I thought it was quite strange. The saint spoke to me with a desperate tone.

“It's not right to play around with a person's life. Please stop it.”

“You're such a hypocrite. Didn't you take part in killing Romeo? Don't try to ignore your own sins.”

The saint responded to my reproach as such.

“Who's Romeo?”

She asked me this with blurred eyes, as if she had become a different person altogether.

“...You sure you've slept enough?”

“I’m completely fine. Slept enough.”

How strange. Her eyes were sick for a person who had slept, and her forehead had drops of sweat streaming down it.

“Romeo Smith. That was the Warrior’s name. Remember?”

“I don’t know anyone like that...”

A blank response void of any emotion. I realized something was terribly wrong, and began to relay more information to her.

“The undying. Sword dancer. The Warrior. His name was Romeo Smith. An American. He was one of the members of the hero’s party, and was also your former comrade. The person who loved you.”

“You’re saying quite a lot of strange things.”

The saint smiled like a sickly patient.

“You’re the one who needs more sleep, huh, Mr. Murderer? The Warrior’s name isn’t Romeo Smith, it’s ○○○ ○○○.”

...What the hell is that name? I heard it, but I couldn’t even begin to try to pronounce it. It was almost as if the translator was returning broken text back to me. I realized the weight of the

situation, and contacted Necro immediately. A bit later, the man ran towards us with a clatter.

“Morto...”

Necro uttered the saint’s name with a saddened voice as he came up next to her. I could see that he was desperately trying to hide his face that seemed to be on the verge of tears.

This wasn’t like him.

The saint didn’t seem to notice that though, and asked an innocent question to Necro.

“What is it?”

“Eh? It’s nothing, it’s nothing...”

Necro spoke to her with a soft and caring voice, as if he was taking care of a small child.

“You must be tired. You should get some sleep.”

“I’m not that sleepy... I’ve already slept enough as a matter of fact.”

“Still, go sleep some more.”

“Alright, then...”

The saint turned to me and waved her arms.

“Mr. Murderer, please have a good night. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

I watched her quietly, then eventually waved back with a kind smile.

*

At a table on the first floor of the inn. Necro explained to me that this condition of hers began about two years ago.

“Autobiographical memory distortion, was it? The condition is pretty damn strong for her, though.”

“...Is that so?”

Memory isn’t perfect. Humans were made to remember only the happy things in life, and occasionally reformat certain memories in life. Then what about Morto’s ability?

[Total Recall].

It was abnormal to have perfect memory as a human. It wasn't natural. Even my brain, the Palace of Memory, wasn't able to recall everything that I see and hear perfectly. The saint's ability was closer to an error in this world.

That was because perfect memory would make someone be able to recall the worst of the worst memories in perfect condition. This was both a great advantage and a disadvantage—. No, it was a flaw that couldn't be fixed.

“Just think about it. You can't forget horrid memories that you desperately want to forget. A person like that has no choice but to go crazy. Even meds can't fix something like this. Don't worry too much about it, I guess? This won't affect our mission one bit.”

That horrid memory that Necro was talking about couldn't be Romeo Smith's death. It was something darker than that. Something that was dark and unsightly enough to render the saint into this state. I didn't bother asking any more though. A failure of a product like me never had any interest in other people in the first place. Such things were worthless. I just hoped that Necro would get done with this talk as fast as possible. I half-listened to Necro's story, then interrupted him in the middle of his story.

“I get it. So it's a form of memory distortion?”

The saint loses her memory of a person when someone close to her dies. Because the death of those she didn't know didn't make her sad. Because the deaths of those on the other side of the world

didn't matter to her.

That's good.

Because I'm already dead, because I'm a dead person, she'd never forget about me.

Well...

I suppose that doesn't matter, does it.

Chapter 37. How To Kill Time

The next day, we enlisted the help of Demonic Walker to move to the Zaiman Desert. Our destination this time was the Arachne's Nest, a city built by summoned people atop a giant mechanical spider. This was where our next target, the Thief, lived.

His power was [Time Manipulation], an ability that allowed him to see into the future. This probably allowed him to foresee our arrival. The members of the special task force weren't used this time, at my request.

“Hah... Kuh... I can only... Take you this far. I can't teleport inside the Arachne's Nest, because, hah, the Arachne has a barrier cast around it.”

Demonic Walker was drenched in sweat, despite the cold weather. It seemed that he used a large amount of his stamina to get us this far.

“Wow, you're pretty useful. Sure you can't stay with us for the rest of the mission?”

Demonic Walker smiled tiredly at Necro's words.

“Huff... It's not like I can leave the front lines for long, after all. Ah! But if you do contact me at some point, I'll be sure to find time to come down.”

I could tell what was going on. The teleporters probably got tasked with the supplies. Because their numbers decreased, the amount of work they had to do probably increased as well. Losing one in the front lines would probably be a massive loss. Necro put his hand on the Demonic Walker's shoulder to praise him.

“Oh, right, right. I didn't think about that. This is good enough. Thank you for your hard work.”

“Thank you! I'll be going back then.”

“Right, alright. I'll see you next time.”

Demonic Walker stepped back, and saluted the three of us.

“Work hard. Storm!”

He's loud. And what's up with his eyes? He's looking at me with eyes filled with admiration?

Was it because I got revenge for him? Because I killed the Warrior? His eyes were quite annoying. Once Demonic Walker left, I put up a giant container building on top of a hill. The building itself was worth 1,500,000 dollars. Necro and the saint let out an audible gasp when they saw what I did.

There was no need to buy a tent if I had all this money. Plus, there were still eight hours till the land spider would arrive. I was planning on analyzing [Time Manipulation] in this house. I went

inside, and opened the report on the Thief at the kitchen table.

The man's name was Chrono Historia, which roughly meant "History of Time" in Latin. I kept reading his report, and ended up stopping at a certain place.

"He was discriminated against because he was black?"

The saint, who had been making a cup of hot cocoa for herself, answered my question.

"Racism exists in this world as well, after all. Well, rather than be discriminated for his skin color, it was more because he couldn't hide the fact that he was from a different world."

"Wait, he was discriminated against because he was from a different world?"

"It's not that surprising, is it? Discrimination is born out of differences. Those of different worlds have been looked at with a positive light thanks to the Hero, but it was pretty darn bad back then."

"Hm..."

I haven't even heard of such a thing happening in the history textbooks.

“Just thirty years ago, people from other worlds were lower than slaves. It was common enough to hear about them waking up without any of their limbs after drinking some tea in an inn.”

“So I guess I came at the right time.”

The saint clicked her tongue at that.

“People are still dying because of discrimination around the world, and you still have the gall to say that, Mr. Murderer?”

“Why wouldn’t I? If you don’t like it, you might as well strike down the forces of evil yourself. But you won’t do it, right? Because it’s dangerous. You can act like a good person, but you can’t do good when it really counts.”

“...Ouch. Words like those are unfair.”

Who cares? I ignored the saint, and continued to read the report.

Status [Normal]

Level 9(EXP 35%)
Name Chrono Historia
(Arachne)
Title Unknown
Time Control
Class. Human
Pers. Short On Time
Power Knife Edge
Present(Lv.6)

HP 120/120(+0)
MP 0/0(+0)
Attack 35(+65)
Spell 0(+80)
HP Regen. 3(+0)
MP Regen. 0(+0)
Defense 20(+45)
Magic Res. 30(+15)

Abilities

Xenoglossy (Lv.2)

Dragon Blood(Lv.1)

Demon Eyes

Oracle (Rk.S)

Artifact

Grand Thief's Vault(Rk.A)

Equipment

Path Breaker(Rk.C)

Gramshen(Rk.C)

Color Dragon Armor(Rk.C)

Horoshiboke(Rk.A)

Inventory

Unknown

The Thief's stats didn't seem all that outstanding compared to the Warrior. His skills weren't really anything either.

Apart from that...

[Grand Thief's Vault] – An artifact that could only be earned by a thief that gained recognition from god. Appears in the form of a tattoo on the back of the hand. The left hand stores objects in a different dimension, and the right hand summons the objects that the left hand took.

It was an ability similar to my Vault. He must have amassed his money there. According to the reports, the amount of cash he has should easily be above 200,000,000 dollars–. His items didn't seem normal either.

[Unrestrainable = Path Breaker] – Rank: C

– Shoes that makes it impossible to restrain the mobility of the user. It becomes impossible to forcefully move or stop the user of these shoes. It is possible to walk on walls, ceilings, water, and even air with these shoes.

How fitting for the Thief. It allows him to escape traps easily.

[Shadow Crow = Gramshen] – Rank: C

– A magic weapon that can be worn like a cloak. It was created using the spirit form of the beast Gramshen.

– <Shadow Feathers> It is possible to throw the shadow feathers on the cloak like a knife. It is no different from a normal knife, but those hurt by the feather will become cursed. No matter how the knives are thrown, the knives will never fail to hit its target.

– <Shadow Restraints> If the feathers hit the shadows of its target, the target will become unable to move.

The feathers shouldn't be able to pierce Hirgenrel. I suppose I'd just have to be careful of Shadow Restraints then.

[Color Dragon Armor] – Rank: C

– A set of leather armor comprised of a jacket and pants. It was made with the leather of the color dragon.

– <Chameleon> It is possible for the user to either appear to look like something else or become invisible altogether.

It would be annoying if he decides to hide with that. Well, I suppose I could use [Information] if that ends up happening.

[The Living Centipede Spear = Horoshiboke] – Rank: A

- Batesian mimicry of a centipede-like insect. It was found in the nest of [The Corrupt King of Hell].
- <Centipede Poison> The spearhead is coated with saliva with paralyzing and corroding qualities.
- <Avarice> Ignores all magical barriers, and once it stabs a target, it refuses to get out until the target is dead.

It was a reddish-black spear slightly longer than the average dagger. The centipede legs on the spear must allow it to both cut into the enemy, and allow the spear to dig into the enemy at the same time. I probably couldn't block it with my spear.

After taking a look at the Thief's stats, I turned the page.

[Time Manipulation = Knife Edge Present] – An ability that controls time.

- [Lv.1] Historic eyes
- [Lv.2] Clairvoyant eyes

- [Lv.3] Slow
- [Lv.4] Acceleration
- [Lv.5] Time stop
- [Lv.6] Reverse

Oh dear... The level of the power was quite low, but it seemed to be a lot harder to tackle compared to Memento Mori. This was quite the lineup of abilities.

How do I beat this...?

The abilities listed here were too powerful. It was possible to slow someone's movements, or accelerate their movements to the point of aging them to death. Stopping time can be used as a defense mechanism.

And of course, the ability that I was most curious about was level five.

Time stop.

How would the Thief be able to move if time was stopped? Air wouldn't move if time completely stopped, right? Would it be

possible for others to sustain injuries while time is stopped?

“The biggest question is ‘how long can he stop time for’, is it not?”

Necro seemed to have read my thoughts, and asked me this.

“Well... That’s a problem as well. Ah, I suppose it’d be better for all of us to talk about it. About if it’s even possible to stop time.”

“Well, um... I suppose he uses it because it works.”

The saint nodded to that. As I thought, these two are no help... I looked at the two with pitiful eyes, and unloaded my question.

“Let’s disregard the fact that we wouldn’t be able to move while time is stopped. We need to consider other things first. If time stops for real, air would become harder than concrete, you know?”

“Air?”

“Because molecules of gas stop mid air, they manage to become the strongest material that never shatters under any circumstance.”

Necro made a confused face.

“Eh? That actually kind of makes sense?”

“That’s why we need to consider if time stops actually work in the first place. Would it actually be possible for someone to stop the time in the entire universe for himself?”

The scale was far too big.

“Fact one. There isn’t just one ‘variant’ of time. Each moving object possesses its own perception of time.”

“Perception of time...? What’s that?”

“The time for earth that revolves around the sun. The time for the person on this earth. The time for the person on the moon. All these are different. It just seems like time is working all at the same time for them, because the scale of it is so small.”

It appeared in movies a lot. Characters would go on journeys in space faster than light, and come back to find their child die of old age by the time they come back.

The Rip Van Winkle effect. Also known as the Urashima Taro effect.

“If he really is able to stop time, he’d have to be able to affect all the perspectives of time for all the objects in this world other than his. Such a thing is impossible.”

“Well... It is possible, though? So what’s up with that?”

I was able to come up with a simple theory.

Chapter 38. Time Stop And Eyes Of Clairvoyance

“Acceleration.”

“Acceleration?”

It seems that my explanation wasn't sufficient. I guess saying just one word doesn't really help. I decided to explain everything to them slowly.

“Think about it in a different way. While someone's perspective of time moves at a second at a time, your perspective of time moves infinitely. To others, it would be like time was stopped by you. An ability that accelerates your perspective of time infinitely. I think that's what Time Stop really is.”

“Well... It's cool and all, but nothing changes, does it? It's still stopping time.”

The saint shook her head at that.

“If we think about Mr. Murderer's theory for a second, there are essentially two ways time can be stopped. Stopping the world around you, and accelerating your perspective of time. These are two very different things. What do you think would happen if you pushed someone when time is stopped?”

The saint understood exactly what I was trying to say, and even knew where I was trying to go from here. What do we call a person like this? An intelligent hominid? Necro thought for a second before answering.

“Wouldn’t the person... Just fall down? Probably?”

“Correct. But why? Time’s stopped.”

“Eh...?”

I continued.

“If the world is stopped, the person won’t fall down despite having time stopped. Air’s is stopped in the first place, so you wouldn’t even be able to move. If the perspective of time is accelerated, time is not truly stopped in the first place, so it’s possible to interfere with objects in the world.”

“Eh... Ah! I see, I get it! So time really isn’t stopped in the first place? But this doesn’t really change the fact that you can’t deal with it, right?”

“No. You can deal with it. If you have a high defense stat, the Thief won’t be able to do much to you despite having time stopped.”

Just like Romeo Smith.

“I could buy an ability related to defense using Heart of Gold, but since I don’t have mana, it’s impossible to use it 24/7. That’s why I was thinking of utilizing [Salvation].”

If I had the effects of Salvation on me, all the damage I sustained would be transferred to the saint. The saint would be able to tank all the damage with her high health and health regeneration.

“So it’s finally my time to shine huh?”

The saint put on airs when I mentioned that I would need her powers. Why is she like this? She’s involved in a plan to kill a comrade of hers...

Ah...!

How stupid of me. I only realized why now. Because the memories about the Warrior were modified, it was obvious that the memories of the Thief, the Fighter, the Summoner, and the Hero would be modified as well. Otherwise, there would be a huge contradiction in her memories. She might be smiling and laughing like this now, but her brain had several screws loose already. Well... I guess it doesn’t matter.

“The plan is simple. I’m protecting myself with Hirganrel, and under Salvation, I will try and kill the Thief. If you two end up meeting the Thief, the plan is called off. Disguise yourself, make yourself go invisible, do anything to hide yourselves. I’ll separate from you guys once we enter the Arachne.”

This was the reason I asked the rest of the task force to not take part in this mission. We needed to have the least amount of variables involved here. Necro crossed his arms with a thoughtful face.

“So you want us to hide and watch from afar?”

“What, you don’t like it?”

“I love it. It means we’d be able to get credit for the mission without doing anything.”

The saint brightened as well.

“So does that mean we can play in the casino?”

What useless human beings... I sent off a healthy amount of disappointment to the two with my eyes, and asked the saint a question.

“Arachne has a casino?”

“Yes, the world’s biggest casino! The upper floors are all hotels, but the view’s absolutely breathtaking!”

“As long as you keep salvation turned on, I have no problems with what you do. It doesn’t have a set range, does it?”

“It works even if you’re tens of thousands of light years away.”

“If you lose consciousness?”

“It gets cancelled.”

This doesn’t make me feel safe.

“Don’t fall asleep.”

“I won’t!”

“That’s good. The only thing left now is the eyes of clairvoyance...”

Eyes of Clairvoyance.

The ability to see into the future. If the Thief could see the future, all my plans would be read by him. He wouldn’t fall for traps or tricks, meaning no plans would work on him. How do I deal with this...

“The other side knows that we will attack, and we know that the other side is prepared. The problem here lies with the fact that we don’t know how accurate the eyes are...”

I organized my thoughts. If the Thief could see the future, why didn't he ask for his comrades' assistance? If he knew about Romeo's impending death, why didn't he alert the man about it?

If I try theorizing why this was the case.

1. The eyes of clairvoyance can't really see into the future.

This can be refuted easily just by looking at the Thief's past actions. The Hero's party always managed to avoid traps at a critical moment.

2. He has bad relations with his comrades.

Would that really be the case for comrades he spent several years with? The reason why they're apart is because they took down the demon king. Because their adventure was over, they'd go back to their normal lives. They can't stick together forever.

3. He doesn't know about the Warrior's death.

Because information is controlled, the death of the Warrior was not known to the public. Even so, this was something that

people would discover with time... Does he have a limit on how far he can see into the future?

4. He saw himself dying if he helped the Warrior.

Probably not true, considering the amount of power we had. If two braves get together, the difficulty of killing them would multiply by ten.

All wrong. I asked the saint a question out of slight desperation.

“How far do you think he can see into the future?”

“Who knows...”

The report didn't show a clear limit on how far he could see. After thinking a little bit, the saint asked for a newspaper.

“Can I have an old newspaper?”

I've never bought something like that... Would it work? I asked her to wait, and searched for a newspaper with my ability. I got a result immediately. Unlike the other products, it appeared instantly when I bought it.

“8/23/1783. You wanted this, right?”

“Yes.”

The saint nodded and pointed at one of the articles.

“‘Landslide erases mountain town in one night.’ According to my memory, the Hero’s party was just 15km away from this town at the time. If Chrono could see the future of the village, he would’ve prevented this from happening.”

“Are there situations similar to this happening?”

“I know of eight similar cases. Of course, it might be that ‘he never knew about this from the start’ or that ‘he didn’t want to take risks’, but...”

I continued her theory.

“Romeo... No, if you think about the Warrior, this would fit. ‘The Thief cannot predict everything’.”

The Warrior did not foresee his death. It didn’t seem like ‘he knew it was coming’ from the start. In other words, the Thief didn’t know of the Warrior’s death, and failed to warn the Warrior about it.

This was the answer.

If he knew all about the future, his ability wasn't clairvoyance, it was omniscience. Would a person really be able to see through all possibilities of the future at once like a god? Would he have enough time for that? Clairvoyance was, in the end, an ability to foresee a 'recording of the future'. Looking into it requires one to invest that much time into it.

But that would be impossible.

Life was a video that was a million hours long. Because time for a human is finite, it's impossible to watch all the movies in the world. Even at two times the speed. Such a feat is impossible. With this, I could organize the Thief's 'weakness' in one line.

[The Thief cannot see all of the future, and the only future he can see is the future he saw with his very eyes.]

This was all but a theory. I needed to test if I was right or not. Necro took a look at the words that I wrote, and gave me his own opinion.

"How the hell is that a weakness? You can't catch the Thief with that."

"It's simple. I don't know if it would actually work, but if it does, the whole process won't even take a day."

Did I say something strange? The two became a little strange when they heard me. Almost like they just heard a joke.

“What? It’s not like he’s unkillable.”

This was different from Romeo. I had finished my inspection of this world, and I had enough cash. The saint carefully opened her mouth.

“Isn’t that... A little too much, even in your standards?”

“What about it? There are a bunch of things that can’t be won even if you turn back time. I just have to work it out like that.”

“Hm? A game that can’t be won even by modifying time? What’s that?”

“Go. Never played it?”

The saint and Necro both shook their heads.

*

The land spider should arrive soon. I put the house back in the Vault, and looked over the horizon. I wonder if it’ll work well this time?

“This is a little concerning.”

“What is it?! What are you concerned about now?!”

I pushed away the saint, and thought of the biggest problem in this plan. A theory of a theory. It was pretty much like building a tower of cards on top of empty air. In the case that the castle in the air didn't have any support under it, I needed to come up with other alternatives. If the method employed for time stop was different than I thought, the plan would fail completely.

Of course, if the future is set, all attempts to fight are useless.

As I thought about the direction of my plans, I was able to see a giant object appearing over the horizon.

Land spider.

A giant machine that was first made to transport supplies in war. To think it'd be able to move with a city on its back... It really made me realize how amazing magic was. The land spider appeared with its six legs, and began to pass the cliff under us.

“Let's go.”

I jumped down the cliff after motioning for the others to follow.

Chapter 39. The Ghost Forest

A man thought to himself as he looked down at a hologram of a forest.

‘I’m going to lose anyways?’

Chrono foresaw that someone would target his life, and decided to hire multiple specialists to assist him. One of these specialists was the young man here, the Strategist. The one who was providing him the map of the forest was his partner, the Observer.

‘I got the money, so I’ll still do my best, but... I can’t help but feel a little down. To think I’d have to try my best despite knowing that I’d lose...’

He had asked Chrono why he’d lose, but he couldn’t get a proper answer out of the man. Instead, Chrono simply decided to give him a huge number of talented individuals.

The Ghost Forest, Unknown Cause, Fragile, Caveman, Unarmed, Modeller, Orderless.

There were two irregulars here as well. The beings known to be in the Brave Class.

‘He wants me to use monsters like those? In the end, the only thing I can do for these people is to put them all in the right places for them to showcase all of their power.’

It was amateurish to rush in and show all your cards right at the beginning. The first battle was to roughly measure the enemy's strength.

‘The very first thing I’ll use will be the most useless. The merc group that’s only good for sniping, the Ghost Forest.’

Despite having created this plan a year back, the Strategist reviewed his plan with a unsatisfactory face. Because his loss was already set in stone. The Strategist looked into the Observer’s map with a frown.

“They really came at the right time.”

He couldn’t see the faces of the killers. It was probably a magic that disrupted recording magic.

‘Why? Why’s the wizard...?’

The Strategist began to think deeply as he looked at the censored videos. The wizard’s final goal was to reach the absolute truth– in other words, become a god. There was absolutely no need for the wizard to hunt heroes of the past era.

‘Damn... I probably won’t ever be able to know. After all, I’m going to lose no matter what I do...’

The Strategist sighed loudly to himself and gave orders to the Ghost Forest.

*

The sun came up as the mist of dawn settled on the ground. I felt killing intent from the forest below us, and told the two that there were ambushers around us. There were four seconds left until we landed. I could see the lights from bullets being shot coming from the forest.

0.1, 0.6, 1.3, 1.9 seconds...

Piiin!

A bullet that came for my head hit the gloves of Hirganrel.

2.4, 2.8, 3.3...

I could hear the gunshot. Based on the time difference between the bullet and the gunshot, the attacker and I were about 1,122m apart. There were eight enemies to the Northwest. I landed on the ground with a roll, and immediately hid behind a tree.

So this is how they're planning on doing this.

As expected of the Thief. He's hiding somewhere safe while he gets his underlings to do the dirty work for him. A hide-and-seek

with someone who can see the future... He'll probably appear the moment he's confident that he can take care of me without dying.

*

The temperature of the forest can go into negatives at times. Enough to let frost develop over the leaves.

[We missed the first shot.]

The sniper threw a potion far away from himself after sending the report to the Strategist. After all, if the other side had a skilled wizard, they'd be able to detect the mana within the potion. But he was too late.

Two kilometers away, Morto had already detected all traces of mana in the forest. And if she could see it, so could Jin. He probably already went on his way towards his targets. The Strategist realized this immediately.

'Fast. Do they have an ability to observe the entire forest like the Observer can?'

Of course, the Strategist couldn't see mana. He could only use contextual clues to try to guess the reason for failure.

"Message the Ghost Forest. Focus on preserving your forces.

Move from your positions and get to your rendezvous point.”

The Strategist’s power was [Battle Command]. An ability that allowed him to look at the statuses of those under him, and allowed him to send messages to them from afar. The snipers began to split away from each other.

“Mana wave detected. Target two is casting magic.”

The Observer sent the Strategist a video after detecting something. The smallest of the three killers was casting magic.

‘Are they trying to hide? Or...’

Fog spewed out of the wizard’s body, which began to cover the entire battlefield.

“Ghost Forest, we’re retreating.”

The Observer’s voice became nervous.

“Target A is moving towards route D at a speed of 37 meters per second!”

The Strategist fell silent as he watched a red dot move across the map.

‘That’s human?’

This was far more than what he had expected. There were multiple traps set in the escape routes that the snipers were using. These traps weren’t something that could be found very easily either. But the enemy was moving at 37 meters per second in a dense forest whilst avoiding all these traps.

‘...I’ll have to create a new plan for this.’

He had already heard that snipers won’t work. The first attacks were always used to taunt the enemy to make them a little more unguarded. This first battle was made to lead the enemy into a field of traps using the snipers.

‘Damn... To think we’d fail so quick...’

The Strategist gripped his pen as he watched the blue dots of his allies disappear from the map. In the end, all the blue dots on the map had gone out.

Soon enough, a ‘pii-’ sound that signalled the death of the Ghost Forest went off.

27 minutes and 35 seconds.

This was the time it took for eight specially-trained snipers to die to just three killers.

‘We didn’t even get to find out about their powers. Should I just go all out here? No, no. The risk is too big. We might get completely wiped out if we do that...’

The first and foremost thing that ability users had to do in battle was to figure out each other’s power. The Strategist, who wasn’t even able to accomplish this, ground his teeth.

‘Is this why Chrono didn’t tell me about the future? To get rid of uncertainties? If I just used the plan from the instance of the future where I succeeded, I would’ve won... He probably didn’t tell me anything because no matter what I’d do, I’d lose.’

The pen in his hand broke.

‘Damn it. I can’t take it. To think I’d have to make a new plan... I’ll have to try to balance out my forces vs. their fighting capabilities properly.’

The Strategist asked the Observer a question.

“The targets?”

“Escaped.”

“Change the screen to camera 1, the town, and use the rest of the resources to pick out a new face.”

The Observer remembers the looks, habits, and clothing of everyone in this town. This was the result of a year of planning.

‘You won’t be able to escape surveillance even if you disguise as someone else. I wonder if they’re relying on something like the eyes of clairvoyance as well? I wonder who they are...’

The Observer immediately put up the casino as a hologram as soon as the strategist motioned him to do so. They already knew where their enemies would be staying at. Chrono had informed them at least this much.

‘We’ll have to end this at the next battlefield.’

The strategist threw away his broken pen and picked up a new one.

*

I took off the tracker from the sniper’s body, and sent a message to Necro.

“How are you doing on your end? Did you let one live?”

[I got two just in case, but why? Are you planning on torturing them for info?]

The Thief knew of our arrival, as I thought. The reason for him placing the snipers in the beginning was probably to check out our abilities. Since this has failed, the Thief might use his entire force to take us down in the next battle.

“Leave one. The others can die.”

[Alright.] “The saint?”

[She’s on stand by somewhere else.]

As I thought, this guy was a lot like me. At least, his thought process was. I told him that I’d contact him later, then looked down at the fainted sniper below me. He really did look like an average person once you took his mask off. I wonder how this person thinks and speaks?

“Wake up.”

The sniper woke up surprised when I slapped his cheek. I pushed him to a tree behind him.

“Ever been tortured before?”

The sniper widened his eyes, and shook his head.

“Anything that you’d like to say before being tortured?”

When I pressed the button on the electric drill in my hand, it began to spin loudly. The sniper shouted frantically as soon as he saw this.

“I-I’ll talk! I’ll say everything!”

...I didn’t want this. I thought he’d be someone more loyal... I wouldn’t be able to tell if he was speaking the truth if he gave up so quickly. I tried drilling a hole into the tree behind the sniper as a test.

Craaack!

“Hii!”

The sniper’s pants became wet.

“I’ll tell you... I’ll tell you everything, so... Please...!”

The sniper was full of tears. I really can’t trust a reaction like this. Humans were beings that you were supposed to be suspicious of at all times. There was no way I’d trust information from a man like this.

I took out a lighter.

The sniper flinched when I opened its cap. He must feel nervous.

“I’ll have to do it.”

“What? Whaat?! No! Don’t! I’ll tell you everything!”

“Can’t trust you.”

“I swear in the name of God! I put my family’s name on it!”

Worthless. Those were all worthless things.

“No need to swear on anything. Ever heard of the Barbeque Murderer?”

“...What?”

“He would tie people to a steel cross that he made, and would slowly roast people on it as he ate them as they cooked. The victims wouldn’t even be able to die because their cuts would be seared immediately.”

“Hii! Hiii! I’ll say everything! Please! Trust me!”

The forty eighth murderer that I killed worked like this. His heart was currently stored in a jar of formaldehyde in the former world, along with all my other collections.

“There are many ways to torture people, but I have no doubt that

this is the best out of them all. The physical pain as you get roasted alive, and the mental pain as they get eaten in front of them. Ah, please remember though, I have no hard feelings towards you. I just want reliable information. The best way to get that is through torture, which is the reason why I'm doing this."

The sniper's teeth began to clatter together. His clothes had become completely wet due to his sweat. I wonder if he'll say the truth now? I've seen people who managed to lie even in a situation like this, though. That's why I caught two. To compare and contrast the information that I get out of them.

"I was joking."

I turned off the lighter.

"There's no way I'd do that to a fellow human?"

The sniper's face was still stiff.

"Well, you'll still die here, but you have the choice between getting roasted to death or being killed quickly without pain. I'll give you the time to decide. You should've been ready for a fate like this the moment you aimed your gun at someone, right?"

The sniper paled.

Chapter 40. Unknown Cause

Ten minutes later. I thought to myself after having killed the sniper painlessly. After comparing the information from the two snipers, I found that the information that I had gotten previously was all true. The ones who attacked this time were a group of trained snipers known as the Ghost Forest. There were seven ability users hired other than them... It wasn't excessive, but at the time, it wasn't too little either. The Thief had decided that 'this was enough'.

This was the moment when the theory of 'him being able to see only his own future'. Right before I got out of the forest, I sent the saint and Necro an updated version of the theory.

"If we fit the pieces together, 1. The Thief does not know of the Warrior's death. 2. He decided that he could end this by himself. 3. He's confident that it would take just sixteen ability users to escape death."

A single conclusion could be reached using this theory.

"The Thief can see up to 'the moment of his death'. He can see the changed future he would get by hiring ability users, but he can't see the moments after his death. So I suppose it's like this?"

I managed to use the oracle to draw a presentation in the air.

1. The first timeline: The killer appears. -> The Thief, having

not seen his future, dies. -> The thief cannot see past this point, as he is 'dead'.

2. The second timeline: The Thief sees into the future. He sees the first timeline. -> He tries to create a trap, but fails. -> The Thief dies. -> He cannot see past this point.

3. The 2+Nth timeline: The Thief sees into the future. He sees the second timeline. -> The Thief realizes that traps won't work on the killer, and tries a different method. This method is to hire ability users. -> Manages to kill the killer. -> The Thief lives. -> The Thief can see images past this point, as he is alive.

4. The present: After seeing the multiple possibilities of the future, the Thief confirms the method of being able to stay alive. -> The Thief hires the ability users. -> The present time.

“You get it? The Thief can only see the first, the second, and the 2+Nth timeline. He can't see the future of 'the present' that hasn't occurred yet.”

Necro shouted at my kind explanation.

“What the hell are you on about! I don't get it at all!”

It's simple though... Even the saint seemed confused this time.

“What? It's simple?”

“It’s not? I’m pretty smart compared to other people, and if even I don’t get it, it just means that you delivered it wrong.”

So it’s still complicated... The fact that these two made it seem like all this was my fault sickened me a little bit. I decided to make an analogy instead.

“Alright. Then... You’ve played RPG games with save functions before, right?”

“Yeah, yeah. RPG games.”

The saint nodded as well.

“My character’s standing at the entrance of a cave. Behind me is the outside world, and in front of me are two paths. Both of them are connected to the exit. First, we save here.”

“Okay. Save.”

“You go to the left path first. But on the way, you encounter a bridge with a monster at the other side that’s far stronger than you. You fight, you die. Right now, you just don’t have the time to level up enough to beat this monster. What should you do, then?”

“You’ll have to load back to the save point.”

“Right. You loaded back. You now know that the path to the left is a ‘failure’. The ‘you of the present’ knows that you need to go to a different path. This is the second timeline.”

Necro nodded.

“Now, let’s try going right. But even then, there’s a high-leveled monster guarding the other side of a bridge.”

“What the hell? Do they get a hard on for bridges or what?!”

“...In any case. ‘I’ know that I’d die if I fight. That’s why I decide to make a trap. For example, I’d make the monster come across the bridge, and I’d destroy that bridge.”

“Oh, then what happens?”

“Oh dear... The monster can fly. Game over. You’d have to load back again. Now, what would you do then?”

Necro thought for a second, then told me what he thought with a suspicious voice.

“I’d either give up, or find ways to kill the monster.”

“Correct. This is the 2+Nth timeline. ‘I’ keep trying new methods of killing the monster. I try using fire, and even resort to poison. In the end, I realize something. Why not hire some mercs in town?”

“Ah...!”

Necro let out a gasp.

“Now, we’re still at the 2+Nth timeline. I hired mercenaries, and went to kill the monster. We did manage to kill it, but the cost was far too big. My arm was cut off, even. This game doesn’t have any healing magic, so it can’t really be healed. What would you do?”

“Well, I’d go back to the save point and hire more mercenaries.”

“Right. And that’s the present timeline. I would be the monster in this present situation. But look. When you go through the left path, you don’t know what’s going to be at the exit. This is the same for the right path as well. Because you died both times before managing to get there. But, what happens if you managed to kill a monster with one of your arms gone? You’d know what’s on the other side of the exit, right? Because you managed to survive that far.”

“Of course.”

“What about now, after you hired more mercenaries?”

“Wouldn’t you still know what’s on the other side of the exit? Because you saw it already?”

I shook my head.

“Wrong. Would it really look the same? Because you hired more mercenaries, you might not lose your arm, and there might not be much blood on the floor as a result. The location of the sun might be changed. It might be noon, or even morning. Because you killed the monster faster. Now do you get that ‘The Thief can only see the first, the second, and the 2+Nth timeline. He can’t see the future of ‘the present’ that hasn’t occurred yet’.”

“Why couldn’t you have explained everything like this from the start?!”

I would’ve gotten a little frustrated if he didn’t get that, thank god he did. If the Thief manages to make it so that everything moves according to the 2+Nth future where he manages to succeed, then I’d die. Because of that, I’ll start working with the assumption that ‘I’d die for sure’. What I’m aiming for is the Thief’s inability to see ‘situation 4. The present’. The future is not set in stone yet.

*

We split up once we exited the forest. Necro and the saint went into the casino hotel, and I decided to go to the town square. What I was looking for was a quick win. I had told the two to escape the moment I fail. If everything goes according to plan, the one to kill the Thief would be me. And the Thief’s target would become me as well. Because he knew that I would be going to the town square, it was likely that he would’ve stationed mercenaries here already.

And it was as I thought.

I realized a little too late as I observed the square when I had a blade stuck in my head.

When? Where? How?

It didn't feel like I had been attacked. I couldn't feel pain because I was dead, but there was no way I wouldn't have noticed an enemy attack. It almost felt like 'I had a knife in my head from the start'. If I was alive, I would've died without even realizing why.

Just what is this ability...

Could it be, time control? Or an attack that was far too fast for the eyes to see? No, the attempt was too weak for such abilities. I took out the knife, and tried to see if it was a special item of sorts. It was a cheap knife that could be found anywhere. Being able to pierce Hiranrel with just this... so an ability was involved, after all. The wound on my head disappeared instantly, thanks to the saint's salvation ability.

She must be in quite a lot of pain at the moment.

I ran forward, in order to lure the unknown ability user near me. He would have no choice but to follow if he were to attack. I was observing everyone in the town using the floating eye. Anyone who'd get close to me would be the enemy. I could open up their status screens, then attack the most suspicious one out of all of

them. But this wasn't a good method. Because this was a town of people who came from different worlds.

Everyone here was an 'ability user'.

I approached a person nearest to me, then put my finger on his neck. The man looked back in surprise.

"Eh? Who the hell are you?"

It's not him. His heart wasn't beating fast enough. I couldn't differentiate anyone special in the crowd either. I ignored the surprised man next to me, and took out a pistol and a knife from the vault. The man ran away. I aimed the gun at the people who had their backs turned to me.

Let's see... He should be here somewhere...

Bingo.

I threw my knife at the 'enemy' who was drinking coffee at a cafe terrace.

"Ugh!"

The old gentleman quickly tried to run. I jumped up to the floor he was on and grinned as I placed eight throwing knives between my fingers.

“Found you.”

The people in the cafe all ran away screaming for their lives. The old gentleman looked up at me with a confused face.

“J-just what did I do to you...?”

I took a look at his status screen. His power was called Unknown Cause. It was probably an ability that hid the cause of an action, or ignored the cause and jumped straight to the effect.

It probably worked like this.

Cause: Throws a knife.

Effect: Gets hit by a knife.

If you hide the cause, it just looks like only the effect was left. I was hit with a knife, but didn't see the cause of this effect at all.

“Your pupils didn't move despite the fact that I had my gun aimed at everyone. You were too calm, you know? This is what makes killers so weak.”

The surprised expression on the old man melted away. The next

moment-. My right arm fell off of my body. Smoke and black blood began to spew out of the wound.

“You managed to find out with just that, good job. But did you really think you could win with just that?”

The old man didn't do anything. He was still sitting on his chair.

“A normal person would have died in one shot... Life never goes as one expects it to.”

He doesn't just hide causes, but he can ignore them as well? The item that the old man was holding was [Blessed saint's knife]. It only had ten attack. The reason why he was able to pierce me despite that was the fact that he ignored 'the cause that blocked the knife'.

In other words, he ignored the armor altogether.

If I shot him, but failed to kill him, he might 'ignore the fact he got shot' as well. I slowly approached the relaxed old man. Even now, I was being pierced and cut by his knife. But that didn't matter, as long as he didn't destroy my body completely. That was how strong the saint's ability was.

“...Eh?”

The old man had his head gripped by my hand and frantically tried to escape. He cut away at my arm and body with his knife,

but the wounds disappeared instantly. They must have been transferred to the saint.

I slowly applied pressure to the man's head. Even if he could ignore a cause for something, he could only do it for a specific amount of time. If time was a long roll of bread, a cause was a cross section of a part of this bread. The old man's ability could only get rid of this one cross section. If I applied pressure on this bread from both sides slowly, the man would have to cancel out the cause infinitely, but...

Power came at a cost.

Even if you erase the cause for having your skull destroyed little by little, you can't ignore the flow of time.

I suppose this is enough.

I threw the smushed brain down on the floor, and cleaned my hand with a bottle of water. I had thought someone else would come and attack me, but it just turned out to be one person. There ended up being no point to me being so on guard. I ignored the people that were beginning to crowd around me, and searched the body of the old man. Hopefully there's something good...

A total of 35,000 dollars. It wasn't much. Well, seeing how he was nothing like the Warrior, I suppose it's obvious that he would be poor as well.

There were five left. The idea of hiding behind a wall of paid mercenaries was smart, but having me kill them off one by one like this was simply a waste of money. He should know this since he saw the future. So why was he acting like this? I passed the crowd as I pondered this.

Chapter 41. Fighting With Numbers

Unknown Cause [OFFLINE].

The Strategist frowned as he took a look at the red text in front of him. He deployed the man to buy some time, but to think he'd be killed in under a minute...

The opponent didn't even use his power either. He had thought that the man would use it this time, but the man just overwhelmed Unknown Cause with his physical abilities alone.

'Why didn't he use his power? Or... has he already used it and I simply didn't notice? Or could it be that he can't use it? Because it's not suited for battle?'

Not all powers were suited for battle. In fact, the number of powers that were suited for it were few and far between. Most actually possessed auxiliary powers like the strategist.

'Bastard... Why did he employ me if he knew this was going to happen? Ah, is that it? I'm supposed to lose?'

Things wouldn't have turned out like this if Chrono had told him about the enemy's powers. But what Chrono wanted was to have the flow of time take its course, just like objects on a conveyer belt. Chrono was probably relying on a timeline where the Strategist lost.

When he thought about it, he could tell that Chrono only wanted to change the latter parts of the future. Because the future would change if the current events were to be changed from what Chrono had seen, Chrono refrained from telling anyone about the future. He was simply following the flow of time until the time of his death so that he could strike down his cause of death.

‘That would require history to take its course till the end. After all, any changes to it would distort the future.’

If one were to organize the events of this mission into the alphabet, the event that Chrono was planning on changing would be X. If the previous events were to be altered, the future might change, hence the reason why Chrono was planning on letting A through W take its course. He would alter event X in order to change the results of events Y and Z. The Strategist was able to see the limits of Chrono’s abilities through this.

‘If there’s a person who could see the future, the future becomes uncertain. Because a person who knows the future might as well change it. In the end, Chrono doesn’t know what will happen after the event X. This must’ve been something that the ‘me of the past’ had thought of as well.’

The Strategist sighed as he leaned back on his chair. As long as Chrono didn’t tell him anything, the future would take its set course. As long as the Strategist couldn’t get out of these shackles of the future, he would, in the end, be a puppet. No matter what happened, only Chrono could change the future. And the Strategist would always fail like an idiot, no matter how much he struggled.

‘What use is all this if the future’s already set? This doesn’t feel good at all.’

No matter what he did, no matter how hard he worked, nothing would change. As long as there was a person who could see into the future, he could not escape the web of fate.

‘If only Chrono didn’t exist...’

The pen in his hand broke as soon as he had this thought.

‘Oh dear... Just what did I... focus, focus! I’m a pro. I need to try my best no matter what the circumstance. For now, I’ll keep it a secret that Unknown Cause has died.’

One of the biggest problems that a group composed of powerful people suffered from was the fact that not many cooperated due to their pride and greed. After all, these people disliked jumping straight into danger. And this time, the danger was even something that forced a hero to hide. The fact that Unknown Cause was killed would turn their suspicions into absolute certainty. These people would escape the moment they determined that the situation was dangerous. Money was money, but life was more important, after all. The Strategist, therefore, was in charge of controlling information to prevent situations like this from happening.

‘Good. Using the police, I prevented the news from the town square from leaking, and the new faces in town that have been

confirmed till 9:17AM number sixty. Three would be the killers that have disguised themselves, but who are the other fifty seven...?’

These people who had walked out of the forest were dressed up as tourists. Probably a result of some magic. These people were walking into the casino hotel in groups of eight or nine. One of the killers was in the town square, which meant that it was likely that the other two were a part of the tourist group. Of course, they could be hiding somewhere else as well, which was the reason why he requested the Observer to be on the lookout.

‘If we think about Chrono’s orders from the other side, the person in the town square would be the person who kills Chrono, and one of the other two would be the person making this killer close to being immortal.’

The Strategist nodded.

‘Is that it... I can only take out the one in the square once I kill the two in the hotel? And that’s why the one in the square hid the other two. So why did they all go into the hotel then? It would be more useful to play hide-and-seek by dispersing throughout the town. And the number of people here... Where did they...? For now, it’d be best to abide by the plans.’

Chrono had requested that he ‘refrain from killing or destroying those unrelated to his battle’, despite the fact that this was something where his life was on the line. What the Strategist was planning on doing now was borderline terrorism. He had bought the hotel with Chrono’s money, and filled the building with

soldiers, but these were people as well. Thinking about the amount of people that would die in this exchange made his shoulders feel heavy.

“9:45AM. Close hotel.”

Once the strategist confirmed that all the tourists had entered the building, he sent a signal to the three thousand soldiers in the building.

“Caveman and Orderless will go to the rooftop from the entrance. Fragile and Modeller will go to the basement floor from the rooftop. The duck hunt begins now.”

They were all pros. They were all prepared to die the moment they entered the mercenary business. The strategist deployed his troops and watched the hotel closely using the Observer’s CCTV-like ability.

The tourists were boarding the elevator now after checking in to the hotel.

*

A “ding” sounded out as the elevator came to a halt. The moment the door opened, the elevator was showered with bullets.

Tadadada!

An excessive amount of bullets were fired at the elevator. The elevator instantly became covered with a crimson red color, and the bright flashing lights of the gunshots lit the area. The middle-aged man and woman inside the elevator fell down with blood gushing out of their wounds. Even after they fell down, the hail of bullets didn't end. On the other side of the elevator were three soldiers in bulletproof vests. The weapons in their hands were semi-automatic shotguns. The three held the red-hot guns in their hands as they carefully observed the elevator. The two tourists inside had been turned to a mush of meat.

But the three soldiers didn't go in to confirm the kill. Their opponent was the wizard. They knew better than to just approach the corpses. They threw grenades into the elevator and ducked under cover immediately.

Bang!

The building slightly trembled as smoke slowly filled the corridor. The trio was using hand signals to communicate amongst themselves. Eventually, one of the soldiers got the signal to check on the corpses, and once he looked out from cover, a skinny hand latched onto his head.

It was a skinless red hand. The soldier in its grasp was dragged into the black smoke. A short scream followed.

Chomp, crunch, crunch.

The soldiers quickly moved away in surprise as they heard bones break and flesh tear. They could see a bloodied hand try to grip onto the walls, leaving a bloody imprint on it. What was revealed shortly afterwards was a peculiar corpse. It was a corpse puppet created out of Necro's Gebesh and the Bone Collector. There were fifty seven puppets that were disguised as tourists.

One more was just added to the group.

The dead soldier slowly revealed itself to its former comrades.

“Kyaha!”

It glared at the two with blood-red eyes. This wasn't happening just here either. The corpse puppets were charging towards soldiers all over the building in order to infect them. All this was as Jin had expected it to go. Necro, who had managed to get inside his room disguised as a tourist, laid Morto down on a bed.

“Hey, hey, come back to your senses already.”

Her blackened, dead flesh didn't even allow her to move. The state of her body clearly showed that Jin had been attacked. But what Necro was talking about was not the pain she was going through.

“Look at what's in front of you properly. He's not normal, you know? He's a monster.”

Morto knew full well what Necro was talking about. Unease. This was what she felt whenever she faced Jin. All of his playful acts, all of his playful voices, were fake. What reflected in his eyes weren't something human at all.

He was simply imitating a human.

One was able to tell that this was the case whenever he made a slip. What was inside was simply a machine that only sought profit. If he deemed it fitting, he wouldn't hesitate in killing friends or family.

"I... know..."

The saint let out a painful moan as she said this. She knew. As the person who was around him for longest, she knew this better than anyone else. The person she was dealing with was someone who wasn't capable of understanding human emotions. If he deemed it profitable, he would snap her neck in an instant. After all, the only thing truly precious to him was himself.

That made her sad.

She acted like a friend to him because of that.

So that he wouldn't feel alone.

So that he could change.

She was broken. She couldn't be fixed anymore. But... despite that, she might have a chance at saving him before her inevitable death. Perhaps this was something only she desired. Perhaps Jin didn't want this at all. That didn't matter anymore.

Morto thought of Jin in the stables reading a book under the stars, and put her hands on her thumping chest.

Chapter 42. Dragging Out Time

So he took my bait. It was inevitable for logical people to take the bait. After all, there was no reason to fight someone who couldn't die. Logically speaking, it was better for him to aim for the source of the power that made me close to immortal. In other words, he would be better off trying to kill the saint and Necro. From here, I could tell how much the Thief had 'seen'. Till now, everything worked out for him. After all, if things didn't go like this, he wouldn't have even attempted something like this.

Killing Necro would take at least several hundred nukes.

He would revive as long as there were corpses a hundred kilometers away from him, thanks to his power. The same applied for the saint. It would be exceedingly difficult to take down the immense amount of health that she has. If you failed to take her down at once, she would use her magic to heal herself back up. Realistically, attempting to kill me was the best solution. If you know you can't kill someone, you don't even try to kill them. The defeat of the Thief was made almost certain thanks to this.

I just had to do well at this point.

I stopped in front of a crosswalk as I walked towards the hotel. The scenery around me reminded me of a modern city— high-rise buildings and cars everywhere. It was as expected of a city built by people from different worlds. This was probably created using different powers in conjunction with each other. The signal turned green, and a significant amount of people began to cross the street. I walked leisurely as I carefully looked at the man walking towards

me from the other side.

His name was Douglas.

His clothes were quite the sight. Despite having worn a suit, he had knuckle dusters on his hands, and he even had protectors for his knees and elbow. He seemed to give off an impression of someone willing to destroy anything that came his way.

...He's an enemy.

We were getting closer now. Douglas muttered under his breath when we reached within arm's length of each other.

"This world is beautiful, and weak. Almost like glass. [Fragile World]."

A halo formed above his head, signalling that a power had been used. The people on the crosswalk immediately realized what was happening, and began to run. The man attempted to punch me, but only managed to touch my shirt instead.

The shirt shattered like glass.

"Ah...!"

This ability was dangerous. I couldn't rely on the saint's ability to save me this time. I tried to increase the distance between the two

of us, but Douglas ran in towards me immediately. As I thought, he's looking for a melee battle. But his chance to kill me was gone already since he missed his first strike. I took out a shotgun from the vault, and pulled the trigger.

Bang!

Douglas flew back from the power of the buckshot. There was no blood. It seemed that he had some kind of an armor on his body. And he also managed to reduce the damage by turning all the bullets into glass. Douglas rolled backwards as he fell to break his fall, and ran towards me again. He was trying to get close to me desperately, but I had no intention of helping him.

And his weak point was quite obvious as well.

I shot below Douglas' feet. The bullets went right through, and thousands of cracks began to form on the floor.

Shatter!

The concrete floor shattered like glass, and Douglas fell right through. If he could treat the world around him like glass, the same logic applied to the ground below him as well. I could tell that this was the case due to the fact that his heels didn't have any protectors.

Well, this won't be enough to kill him though.

I took out all the barrels of oil from the vault, and threw them into the hole. All ten barrels. After doing this, I lit a lighter and threw it in as well.

Fwoosh!

A huge fire soared out of the hole, and a horrid scream dug its way out for a short second. Those trapped in fire don't die because of the heat. They die by suffocating on the massive quantity of carbon monoxide in the air. Even if Douglas manages to escape the fire by digging a hole in the wall, the carbon monoxide would get to him.

Well, he did manage to successfully waste some time.

The other four killers should be going towards the other two at this point. They won't die, but they might suffer quite a bit before I get there.

Well, I suppose I'll just have to trust their titles as the world's strongest wizards this time, I guess?

I shrugged, and checked my wristwatch. It was 9:50 AM. By the time the Thief gets trapped in the hotel, his death becomes completely certain. No matter what he does, this becomes absolutely certain. I used Heart of Gold, and checked on the delivery times.

There were a hundred items that were to be delivered in a water

tank at 10 AM directly located at the ceiling and the basement.

And in a few minutes, the barrier would be activated. The same kind that was used to trap Romeo Smith. A type of barrier that allowed people to come in, but not get out. Since there were pipes set up below the hotel, there was no need to put a hose around the building this time. I left the rising tower of black smoke behind me as I walked to the hotel.

*

A man that was said to be able to fight civilization on his own, Uras. The one thing he wore as a muscular giant of 2.7m was a rugged pair of pants created out of a wild animal's hide. He, a brave class as well as an irregular in this world, was the one known as the Caveman.

“Finally, time to do some work.”

Weeds began to sprout from the marble floor under him when he walked. The staff of the hotel had already all evacuated. He reached the center of the hotel lounge, and clapped once. Every device in the hotel halted at this point.

Pshhhhh.

The CCTV turned off, as if it had run out of energy. The next to go was the elevator. The lights in the building all turned off, leaving only the emergency lights of the exit signs to light up the

hallways. All this was caused by Uras' power, <Death of Civilization = The Allegory of the Cave>.

Tadadadada!

Necro's corpse dolls that had come down from the second floor began to shoot at Uras. But the bullets all stopped in midair before they reached Uras, and fell down on the floor. It didn't stop there, though. The bullets began to grind against each other— eventually turning to dust. Uras let out a thunderous laughter.

“Pa-hahaha! How annoying. These damn flies! Why don't you get to work as well, little lady? You should do your contractor proud.”

A ripple appeared on the floor of the jungle-like hotel lounge. A young woman popped out of the marble floor, as if she was exiting a body of water.

<Orderless> Chaos.

She had put gloves on her feet, and shoes on her hands. The appearance of this strange individual who even wore shirts and pants oppositely instantly got the attention of the corpse puppets. Bullets spilled out of their guns towards Chaos. The ones who should have been getting hurt was Chaos, but strangely enough, the ones falling down were the corpse puppets. This was because her power, Orderless, was reversing the results of their attacks.

“Boo~ I was working so lazily, and you tell me to be even lazier.

Boo~ I wouldn't have worked anyway even if you didn't rush me."

She was even speaking in opposites. Chaos put her hands on the floor with a pout. A halo appeared over her head, and the first floor of the hotel became enveloped in a strange light.

Kii, gigigigi.

The appearance of the floor changed accompanied by the sound of metal being altered. The first floor of the hotel turned into the second floor, the sixth floor turned to the fourth, and the ceilings and the floors of floors three and seven were reversed. Some floors were rotated 90 degrees, and others combined with different floors to form a maze. It was almost as if someone took apart the hotel and rearranged it as he saw fit. At this point, it would be impossible to escape the hotel because it constantly changed form as it saw fit.

"I didn't work. Scold me more, idiot."

Chaos rolled forward, and walked towards the front desk doing a handstand. The wooden desk began to twist and crack into a multiple different shapes. No, to be more specific, a certain part of the desk was twisting and spinning like a wheel on a slot machine. From an elevator to a bathtub, from a bathtub to a casino. She was changing the hotel's structure as she saw fit, until she got what she wanted. After switching the hotel around several tens of times, Chaos stopped once an emergency staircase appeared. Uras began to move once Chaos gave him the signal.

Chapter 43. Tetris

“The Strategist isn’t much, is he? I could’ve finished this all by myself.”

Said a muscular Asian woman while she was walking down a hotel corridor leisurely. Her qipao decorated with a red spider lily was stuck tightly to her body, and her long hair was tied into a bun secured by a hairpin.

Lin Yangsen.

She was an A-ranked killer hired by Chrono. To the underground world, she was known to have an ability close to that of someone in the brave-class. If the Ghost Forest had a battle rating of one, she would be fifty. Her unique battle style that combined her power with qigong was something that allowed her to thrive in a chaotic battlefield. Her ability to sense those around her was enough to pick out any life form within ten meters.

Taah!

Corpse dolls appeared from around the corner and shot at Lin. There weren’t that many places to hide from the bullets in the narrow corridor. In this situation, Lin simply smiled. Her hand that was raised up like flowing water began to turn red.

Ping! Pi-pi-ping!

They shot until they no longer had ammo, but the bullets were all deflected by Lin.

“Attacking first without saying anything? You’ve no etiquette, do you?”

This was now a battle of hide-and-seek. Just like how those trying to kill Chrono needed to seek him out first, those willing to stop the killers needed to find them as well, even under constant fire from the dolls. Lin ran forward to the reloading dolls with her hands spread widely to the sides. It was almost as if she was trying to clap.

The invincible hands, [Unarmed = Red Hand].

Her two hands clapped together. A doll’s head became stuck in between her hands, and flattened like paper. The headless body swam in the air for a short while, then fell. The doll next to it was taken care of with an iron mountain attack. This one attack made the doll fly up into the wall behind it.

Crack! Bang!

Before the doll even had the chance to touch the ground, a red hand broke through the wall and crushed its head.

“Mn?”

Lin felt a presence behind the wall she had just punched through.

It was a room that was supposed to be filled with corpse dolls. But Lin could see that what was inside this room was clearly alive.

“Found you!”

Lin didn't go in right away, but instead, stepped back and contacted the Strategist. Now, the other three should arrive sooner or later. She just had to block the entrance so that the wizards wouldn't leave. Even for the wizard, fighting four people at once would be quite disadvantageous for him. Lin heard a loud bang from inside the room, and became confused. Why was such a sound...

“Ah...!”

Lin realized what was going on a little too late, and rushed into the room. The enemy was the wizard. Just like how she could blast through walls, the wizard could blast through them as well. Lin speculated that they were running to the room next door, and broke through the door. At this moment, Necro, who had been hiding his presence next to the door, attacked her.

Pow!

It was a kick aimed straight at her chin. Lin's body soared upwards, and hit the ceiling. She lost control of her arms as her body entered a state of shock. The orifices on her body began to spill blood. This was the wizard of this world. Or rather, this was the power of Necro even without him using magic. He dropped down on the ground, and motioned the now-healed saint to

quickly move.

*

As I thought, there were spectators. The hotel that had been surrounded by a barrier had turned into a strange postmodernist structure.

Did it look like this from the start...?

I couldn't tell, since I've never seen it before. Perhaps they blocked the entrance to the hotel using some kind of magic. In any case, the people around the hotel are quite annoying... I snuck into an alley, and activated my ability.

[A Thousand Thunderbirds].

Chichi, chichichi!

Blue lightning soared up into the skies, and dropped all around the hotel at an extreme speed. There wasn't even time to react. The spectators' eyes rolled over as they fell to the ground. I set the rest of the birds to electrocute anyone who came near, and walked over to the hotel.

How should I get in...

There was no entrance. It was almost as if someone cubed up the hotel and made all the doors and windows face inwards. I probably could break the wall with boiling blood, but... It couldn't be that simple.

I suppose I could still try doing it.

I walked a few steps away from the wall, and shot at it with a shotgun. By the time I shot my thirtieth shot, the wall was revealed. But that was only for a second. The wall spun like a spinning door, and closed up the hole in it. This would probably repeat no matter how many times I try to punch a hole. It looked like whoever was inside was replacing the external damage with new pieces from inside the building. It might be possible to get in by breaking the wall completely with one attack, but my body wasn't capable of that at the moment. The outer walls of a casino was designed to be sturdier than it looked.

It was unfortunate, but I'd have to spend money here.

The money I had earned earned from selling Romeo's weapons was 116,300,000 dollars. This was the money I had after selling everything apart from Horganrel. After paying off the interest fee from borrowing money last time, and after using the money for this mission, I had 115,800,000 dollars left. However, I couldn't use abilities that used mana. The abilities that I could use were ones that used up my health, like boiling blood, or ones that were contractual abilities like the Thousand Thunderbirds.

What should I buy... After looking at the list for a good while, I found something that caught my interest.

[> Dematerialization: 25,000,000 dollars]

[Disturbing Blessing: 35,000,000 dollars]

[Phase Shift: 12,000,000,000,000 dollars]

...

Dematerialization?

I could see begin to see a way out of my predicament. When I clicked on the ability, an explanation for it appeared in a separate window.

[Dematerialization]

– Rank: C+

– An ability that turns one into a being like a ghost for thirty seconds. Uses 1% of the total health.

Hoh... I would definitely be able to go through this wall using this. And if I use it right, I should be able to dodge attacks as well.

Pretty good. I'll use this.

When I pressed the purchase button, a blue light enveloped me for a split second. What I learned once I acquired the skill was that unlike Thousand Thunderbirds, this was an ability that could be used every three minutes. The used health point could be replenished with a health potion easily. When I activated the ability, my vision became a shade darker, and I heard a strange sound akin to diving into water.

It really does feel like I became a ghost. I could still see my hand, but it was transparent.

...Strange. I'm not sinking despite having been dematerialized?

After looking around for a bit, I raised my hands up in the air like superman. I awkwardly began to rise from the ground. It was hard to maintain a proper posture. I guess it's because I have no weight at all. Instead of going straight up in a standing position, I was almost spinning upwards like a water bubble. I passed through the hotel wall in this state. I cancelled the ability, and fell on the ground pathetically.

...No one saw me, right?

I dusted off my clothes as I checked my surroundings. I had

thought I was on the second floor of the hotel, but strangely enough, it felt more like I was inside a jungle. It kind of resembled the lounge without all the grass covering it.

How strange.

There was a staircase where the front desk should've been. Why was there such a thing in the middle of the building? To my right were two destroyed corpse dolls. A product of Necro's black magic. Seeing the color of the blood, it seemed that the dolls were disposed of just five minutes ago.

"Hey, Necro. You still alive?"

I could hear huffs on the other side. Is he running? He told me he took care of Unarmed earlier, so the enemies that were still alive numbered three. The Thief still hasn't shown himself. Necro huffed for a good while longer, then screamed at me for help.

[Hey! Hey hey hey! Seventh floor! Come to the seventh floor! There's two people who are in brave class here!]

"So what? Isn't three vs. two pretty doable?"

[You son of a b...! No, just get your ass over here!]

Well, the saint was pretty useless, after all. Necro was pretty much fighting three people on his own. Two of them were at the brave class at that. I could only send my condolences towards him.

“Ahaha, stop exaggerating and get to the rooftop already. The hotel’s going to collapse soon.”

[Hey! Are you seri...!]

I tuned out Necro as I walked down the emergency stairs. I checked the wristwatch. It was almost ten.

What was to be delivered to the rooftop were giant cubes of marble weighing tens of tonnes.

I arranged it so that they would arrive one after the other, fitting together perfectly. Just like tetris. Once the weight on the rooftop exceeds a certain point, the hotel would collapse at an extreme pace. Of course, I’ve prepared methods to weaken the steel structure of the building as well. What was to be delivered to the basement were thirty time bombs. After all, guns weren’t the only weapons you could buy with Heart of Gold.

Try to stop me if you can, Thief.

Chapter 44. Antihero

On the mundane white walls on the hallways inside of the concrete walls of the hotel, black lines rushed across it forming tens of thousands of squares on the wall. These squares became filled with various colors, transforming the white hotel walls into walls made of playing blocks.

Bang!

A large impact came from behind the wall, which caused it to crumble to pieces. Playing blocks, big and small, tumbled down onto the field of grass and weeds below.

“Let’s play~ I want to play~”

What came out from behind the wall was a middle-aged adult in baby clothes. Behind him was an entire cohort of toy models.

He was the second irregular, the Modeller.

His power allowed him to change anything he touched into toys or snacks that he could control at will, [Dangerous Play = Enfant Terrible]

“You can’t hide~ after all, this entire floor is already my playground.”

The Modeller was searching around the area as he hopped around the maze-like floor of the hotel. His unusual appearance and speech could be linked directly to his power. A person's power and personality were inseparable things. If someone's personality gets stronger, the power would get stronger as well. Due to this fact, the Modeller decided to fiddle with his own brain. In order to make his brain recede into a childlike state.

“Boo~ Negunegu really just want to play. Can't we all just come out and have fun together?”

Necro shuddered as he listened to the man saying this.

[Is this supposed to be a psychological attack? Can't I just punch him?]

Necro and Morto were hiding behind a corner not too far away from the Modeller. Thanks to Morto's disguise magic, they were hidden from plain sight. But it wasn't like they could move silently. After all, disguising the sounds of their footsteps wasn't something possible. Morto tugged at Necro's clothing nervously.

[Don't! We can't make a sound!]

It might've been ok if the only person around was the Modeller, but both Caveman and Orderless were here as well. It wasn't like she wasn't confident in Necro's abilities, but she wanted to get away from any fighting if possible.

“Boo. Not planning on coming out? Negunegu has no choice then.”

The toys around the Modeller began to spread outwards once he gave the order. They may be toys, but they were at the same time objects influenced by his power. The problem was, there was no telling how much power it would have. Necro and Morto carefully crept around the toys, towards the staircase. The hotel floor had been covered in plants due to the influence of the Caveman. Necro, in an attempt to walk carefully, ended up stepping on something.

Creak.

When he looked down, he found that there was a playing block underneath his foot.

‘Uh oh...!’

As a result of the noise he created, the escape route was immediately sealed up. Even the other escape paths turned into walls. When Necro turned around, he found his enemies waiting for him there. Right in front of him was the Modeller, surrounded by thousands of toys.

“Negunegu caught it! Caught you! You’re it now!”

To his left was the Caveman, Uras.

“Pahahaha! Where do you think you’re going?”

Uras flexed his muscles as he let out a giant laughter. Now, there was no way to escape. No matter what he did, Orderless would shuffle the hotel for him.

“Boo. Escape, huge success?”

Chaos looked at the two people in front of her with an amused smile on her face. Displayed on their faces were the looks of absolute confidence. To them, this was a battle already won. Necro laughed hysterically when he saw this.

“Ha, dear me... I’ve been looked down upon, huh.”

Corpse Collector, Undertaker, Wizard of Death, Researcher of Death, King of Death, Black Death, The One Who Spreads The Ashes of Death, King of The Afterlife, The Strongest Black Wizard. The hero of the great war, who used to lead an army of death, angled his chin a little downwards.

“What, you think you’ll win just because you have the numbers?”

The difference between a brave class and an actual brave was the difference between a normal missile and a nuclear one. Just because Necro’s name didn’t spread to the masses didn’t mean he was weak. Necro smirked, and put his hands in his pockets. There was no need for him to dirty his hands to dispose of these three pieces of trash.

Morto closed her mouth as she saw all this.

*

There was a vault at the bottommost floor. It would normally be heavily guarded, but there was no one here at this time. The Thief must've known that any guards would've been useless. I passed through the vault gates by dematerializing.

So he was here after all.

In the empty vault was a single metal chair, with a black man sitting on it. This man, who wore a leather suit on along with over twenty wristwatches, was the Thief. So far, this was just how I expected it to be. The only safe space in this place, even when the building went down, would be the vault. The Thief spoke to me in a jovial tone.

“You’re finally here. I’ve been waiting for five years already.”

Five years...? The hero’s adventures began five years ago. The demon king was only killed four months ago.

“Ah, I know what you’re about to say. ‘You would’ve been better off running.’ or, ‘You wouldn’t be able to stop the destruction of the building with a time stop, right?’ Let’s stop with the nonsensical taunts and talk about something else.”

I was reforming my theory as he spoke. The fact that he foresaw his death five years meant...

“The one who sold out the saint was you, wasn’t it.”

“Ah, I saw this with my eyes of clairvoyance, but you really do have quite the head on your shoulders, don’t you? You’re correct.”

The scenery around me suddenly changed. I struck the wall and realized that the Thief had attacked me by stopping time.

“Ugh...!”

There was a spear stuck in my heart. The Horganrel’s joint pieces were completely broken. And due to the Gramshen’s feather stuck to my body, I couldn’t even move. My innards were completely mashed at this point.

It doesn’t matter for me, since I was dead, but the saint must be...

I looked up. The Thief was just sitting in his chair, as if nothing had happened. If he saw the future from five years ago, he must’ve known that the saint would ‘betray’ him in the future. He would also have known about what she would do. He could have stopped it.

He could have prevented her from getting kidnapped by her own allies.

I thought of the story Necro told me the day Romeo Smith died. It was a year ago, when the great war occurred. The demon king, Mirage Belt, had formed a plan to cause neighboring countries of the world to fight each other. Day after day, people killed each other. In all this chaos, the members of the hero's party all split apart. Some stayed to help allies, and others went off to kill enemy commanders. But the saint, who didn't have any offensive capabilities, was left in the front lines alone. To heal the wounded. The problem began there.

The saint couldn't take seeing people die in front of her, and healed enemy soldiers as well. This enraged some of the allied soldiers.

“Ah~ what a kind girl she is. Just what would allow someone to think that way? Is she just dumb?”

The Thief threw a feather like a dart as he said this. The feather pierced the tip of my finger.

“Why did she heal her enemies? Why did she attempt to kill me? Why did she have to go through all that? What kind of a face do you think I had on me through the whole damn trip? A kind person like her who helps enemies and tries to kill me—”

The Thief stopped talking for a second, and grinned.

“I think humans are cruel animals. It would've been better if they stayed put after being healed. But her having healed her

enemies ticked them off. They restrained her, and realized they could do whatever they wanted to her. Plus, the war had messed up some of their brains.”

Violent soldiers and the desire for sex. It was easy to see what happened during that time.

The saint was unable to eat without the devourer ring because all her organs had disappeared. She, who simply wanted to save people, was shown hell by the people she tried to save in the first place.

The reason for her daily intake of drugs in her tea, and her nightly fits of pain was, this man.

Antihero.

The Thief deployed three thousand people to their deaths despite knowing that they would all die. He is a hero, but at the same time, hides a great evil behind him. —All as I thought. I looked at the Thief, and smiled.

“Can I ask you something?”

“What is it? If it’s a question on how you’ll die, I can answer you as many times as you want.”

“No. I’m just wondering how much time you have till you die.”

The smile on the Thief's face disappeared. Right, that's what I wanted to see.

"It's a simple story. In modern society, people buy cars to save on time. Buying cars and driving cars cost money. Earning money costs time. Playing with time requires you to sacrifice something of equal value. It was just a speculation before, but it seems that I was correct."

The Thief stood up from his seat and walked towards me.

"So what? As you thought, the price for using my power is my life. So what if I only have a month of my life left? You'll die here. Even if you make the building collapse, and spread chlorine gas here, the vault is, as you can see, completely safe. I've even set up a purifier here just in case. And right now, I'm..."

The Thief took out the spear from my heart and pierced it into my abdomen. He then stabbed my legs and my shoulders.

"How is it? It might not hurt for you, but Morto must be in quite a lot of pain right now. I just need to stay here and wait till both you and Morto dies. Simple, isn't it? I would've died due to the chlorine gas in the building before, but the future has changed for me. Haha! Checkmate! This is checkmate!"

Chlorine gas can be produced by combining bleach with detergent. This gas was similar to the one the German troops had used during the Second World War. Even a tiny amount of it would

poison someone, and 0.1~1% of it in the air would be enough to kill a man. The Thief wouldn't die if the hotel collapsed, but the chlorine gas would've eventually have gotten to him. The hotel would've turned into a death well. This was probably how the Thief died due to the eyes of clairvoyance, so it was quite understandable why the Thief was so confident right now.

But. To think he'd have come down here just to escape the chlorine gas...

His thought process of being able to survive as long as he dodged his cause of death was quite comical to me. I couldn't resist myself, and ended up smiling as a result.

Chapter 45. Time Over

10:05AM. The bombs blew up, and the vault shook violently. The ground trembled, and dust fell from the ceilings. The vault kept shaking for a while after the initial explosion. The Thief was shaking left and right because of the shock. As the tremors subsided, he couldn't help but cover his mouth with his hands. He must be experiencing a feeling of catharsis from having cheated death. After laughing to himself quietly for a second, he took his hand away from his mouth, and revealed a wide grin on his face.

“Do you know what just happened? The future changed. I'm supposed to die brutally here, you know. But I ended up living, didn't I? Ahaha, now what? It'll take four days till any rescue comes.”

He shoved his face right in front of me with an evil, childish grin.

“Do you think you can take torture for four days? No, no. The one who is going to be in pain is going to be the saint, isn't it? I suppose it'll still tickle a little, wouldn't it?”

He was completely mistaken about his situation. He's failing to look at his surroundings because of his excitement. I suppose I should correct him a little before waking him up from his little dream.

“Ah, how nice. Congratulations on your victory. But before that, want me to tell you something interesting?”

“What, planning on reciting ‘One Thousand and One Nights’ from memory, to stall for time?”

“Kind of. I was wondering about a theoretical case. If you die here, would the ‘you of the past’ be able to escape this death?”

An infinite loop. It was almost like two mirrors facing each other. The Thief looks into the future of the Thief who looked into the future, and looks at the changed future as a result.

“For example, say that there are three doors in front of you. Behind door number one is a goat. You, being able to see the future, wouldn’t even have to open a door to guess where the goat is. You can just check the future of the first door, the second door, and the third door after all.”

“Aha, I was wondering what you were going to talk about... I wouldn’t even be here if my eyes of clairvoyance was such a convenient ability, don’t you know? I would’ve been in the future where I was the one who killed the demon king, where Morto didn’t have to suffer in the first place. A future where there was no need for you to have been summoned. Didn’t you figure it out yourself? Using my powers takes a chunk outta of my lifespan. I can’t just abuse it like that.”

“Really? That’s good.”

Its powers were as limited as I thought. In the end, this was the most that he could do. Even if he dies here, there was no way the him of the past would be able to see this future. I activated Heart of

Gold and opened my vault, and ‘didn’t take out anything’. Just keeping it open will do.

“You said this was checkmate before...”

“Yes. So?”

“There are two things that you are seriously mistaken about. I was thinking of telling you about it.”

I might not be able to stop time, but I can move forward into the future. After all, this was an ability that all humans were born with. As long as possible, as deep as possible, till it all sets deep inside the lungs. I patiently waited for the future.

“First of all, according to the rules of chess, a king is not a piece that can be killed. You need to put it in a situation where it is rendered unable to move. The game is set not when you kill the king, but when the opponent realized the hopelessness of the situation and concedes.”

The Thief nodded with a suspicious face.

“...And the second?”

“Kings can’t check kings.”

There was just me and the Thief inside the vault. If both of us

were to be kings, a checkmate is impossible.

“The present set atop upon a knife’s edge, [Knife Edge Present]. The amount of time you could turn back with your power was one minute, I recall?”

I should be right. This was the conclusion I reached after observing all his movements. At this point, he wouldn’t be able to go back to the time before the hotel crumbled. I checked my wristwatch with the floating eye, and grinned.

“—Time over.”

“Hm? What time over? Ah, your time? You had no chance to become the hero because you were summoned late, and because the saint tricked you. Your only destiny is to rot here. Was that what you were talking about?”

The Thief pressed his tongue against the inside of his cheek.

“Don’t you think it’s a little too late for you to be doing whatever it is you’re trying to do? Ah! Could that be it? You’re hoping that one of your comrades will come for you? They aren’t going to come. Do you even know how sturdy this vault is? It’ll take at least a week to open it up.”

“So that would mean that not even your spear would be able to pierce it.”

The Thief frowned a little. It seemed that he was a little annoyed at how calm I seemed. He took his spear out of my body, and tried to stab me again, till he noticed something.

“Why...”

“Why am I not regenerating? Good question. If salvation was still on, I would have regenerated immediately.”

“...Could it be, Morto?”

“Morto? Dead? No way. She’s ridiculously healthy. Healthy enough for me to want to tease her for the rest of her lifetime.”

I just rejected the spell. The reason for doing that is...

—I don’t need it.

The saint should be on the Strategist’s helicopter by now— with the three people that were targeting her just minutes before. Perhaps the Observer is the one piloting the helicopter.

“Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock. Time passes even while you think. You should remember that all human beings run to their deaths.”

The Thief just managed to open his mouth after thinking for a moment. It seemed that he had just reached the answer.

“No way... Yeah, no way. The Strategist betrayed me? No way. You’re just saying that in your last breath, aren’t you?”

“I’m dead already.”

I wasn’t the only one who wanted him dead. Humans were animals who chased profit. My offer of paying double the amount that the Thief had paid him was just too appealing to the Strategist. And it was obvious to see what the Strategist, the doll who had to move accordingly to the set future, would have decided.

“It was close. I only managed to get in contact with him just now.”

Heart of Gold level three, [Finance]. I closed the ‘transaction complete’ message in front of me, and dematerialized. As I thought, if I don’t give this guy a proper blow to the head, I’d feel like I suffered a loss.

*

Tatatatatata.

The Strategist looked down at the hotel from afar, from inside the helicopter. It was completely destroyed. The hotel was just a gigantic pile of rubble at this point. Around it were soldiers who had managed to escape the hotel in time.

‘Just what is he...’

In a situation where giant cubes of marble weighed down the hotel from the rooftop, the man simultaneously exploded all the supporting structures that the hotel had, effectively destroying the hotel in the most efficient way possible.

If he didn’t accept this man, this Jin’s offer, he and his comrades would’ve all died in the hotel.

‘I suppose he’s a... hero? Since he prevented the deaths of thousands? But he was the one who destroyed the hotel... Hah, I suppose none of this matters, does it?’

The money he was offered had a big say on his decision, but what really swayed him over in the end was the chance of being able to save the soldiers. The other side was only human, after all. He had no reason to kill that many people. If all he was being offered was the money, then most assuredly he would have declined.

‘Would there be anyone crazy enough to decline a chance to save three thousand people?’

The Strategist smiled bitterly as he looked behind him. He could see the three mercenaries checking their bank accounts with a smile on their faces. In the end, their goal was money. If they could earn money without fighting, then surely they’d do so. Their reputation would take a hit, but they weren’t the type to care about that. The wizards at the back were talking to each other, as if nothing had happened.

“I don’t even need to use my hands.”

Morto said this, trying to imitate Necro’s voice, and silently laughed to herself.

“No need to use hands... You ended up using both of them.”

“Hey, hey, stop it. I’m tired. It really isn’t fun when you’re ganged up on. It’s not that I’m weak, but...”

“I’ll settle this in five seconds.”

“Stop it!”

The Strategist was overcome with complicated feelings as he watched them. In the end, he had failed, but the results of his choice would say otherwise. Perhaps a chosen future didn’t exist after all.

‘I didn’t even make proper plans this time either... Maybe I can call this a draw? It’s a bit shameless on my part though.’

The Strategist smiled as he leaned back on his seat.

Chapter 46. Madman

I escaped from the shadow feather by dematerializing, and then activated the Heart of Gold. The Thief's attack points with Horoshiboke was currently 100. My defense stat, contrarily, was 19(+80). At first glance it might seem sufficient, but the Thief should have no problem getting through this defense stat. He could stop time and pierce through the armor, and then attack once again through the hole in the armor. Of course, the solution to this was simple.

<Purchase complete.>

<Your defense stat has risen by 82 points.>

The total cost was 82,000,000 dollars. Now, my defense stat was 101(+80).

I had no intention of spending this much money, but—.

I put away Hiranrel in the vault and materialized back. This time, too, the scenery around me changed, and my body became stuck in the wall.

So he stopped time again. Obviously, I didn't have any wounds this time. The Thief was staring at me with an enraged face from the other side of the vault. He must've tried to stab me repeatedly while time was stopped.

“I wonder how much of your lifespan gets chipped away every time you stop time?”

I got back up, and slowly made my way over to him. The moment I closed in on him, my body became stuck to the wall on the other side of the vault again. Again, I received zero damage.

“How long are you planning on pushing me away?”

The Thief simply ground his teeth. Did he turn back time? Then he must've heard this response already. I kept making my way back towards him in order to catch the Thief stuck in this prison.

...Mm? Why isn't he pushing me away this time?

Instead of doing something, he just smiled.

“I had thought that you were a rather smart individual, but that doesn't seem to be the case. Why don't you try hitting me? I won't dodge.”

“I won't hesitate then.”

I spat on his face. The Thief's lax face immediately stiffened. He laughed awkwardly, and asked me a question.

“Really... How confusing. Just what was that...? I gave you the

chance to attack, and all you do is this?”

“Ah, it’s nothing personal. I’m just good at noticing things. You’re just planning on using time stop for defensive capabilities, aren’t you? A local time stop, if you will. You stop time in a small area, which would cut down the cost of your ability, and it would prove to become an effective shield.”

The Thief shrugged, and sat on the floor.

“I retract my previous statement. This is a stalemate. I can’t catch you, you can’t catch me.”

“I pity you for thinking that.”

I sat in front of him and smiled.

“Ever heard of snapback (還擊)?”

“Snapback...?”

“It’s a Go term. The first move is intentionally supposed to put you at a disadvantage. The opponent gains a small profit at first, but would lose much more the next turn.”

“If you’re planning on comparing it to this situation, I suppose your move of coming into the vault was a snapback... Cough, cough! Ah, I’m sorry. I don’t really understand why I’m coughing

all of a sudden?”

The Thief became confused when he saw his glasses fogging up. Suddenly realizing the situation he was in, he immediately stood up and covered his mouth and nose.

“Too late.”

The humidity of the vault had gone up as much as it could at this point. As a result of this, I opened my vault even more. The gas that spewed out of it filled the room despite the atmospheric pressure inside. There was even enough moisture to cause beads of water to condense on the ceiling.

“If you stop time, you can run a hundred meters in just 0.000...1 seconds. But in the end, the amount of air you breath is the same as anyone else. It just seems like that wasn't the case to everyone else.”

Your perspective of time is yours, and the perspective of the observer is the observer's. Even if you stop time, the clock is still ticking.

“In other words, you might as well explain time stop to be a simple boost in one's physical abilities. Now, would the air you took in while you stopped time for one minute be the same as the air a normal human breathed in for one minute? I don't think so.”

The Thief who made use of Time Stop stayed in the vault for

much longer than me, and breathed in much more air than me as well. Well, I had no need to breath in the first place.

“Feel your breaths getting shorter as we speak? You should be feeling nauseous and bloated about now as well.”

His face stiffened when I said those words to him. A bottle of water and various herbs appeared in his hand immediately. It was probably supposed to be some sort of antidote. The Thief dumped the herbs in his mouth like pills and chugged the water. He spat it out immediately. Must’ve choked. I stood up, and slowly walked around the Thief.

“Paraquat. It’s a herbicide that’s often known by the name of Gramoxone. The lethal dose is 15 mL. It causes fibrous tissues to form in the respiratory system, causing the victim to die of asphyxiation. Of course, there is no antidote for it as of now.”

Nowadays, people mixed this material with blue dye and a vomit-inducing chemical to show that it was poison, but it was originally colorless and odorless. The toxicity of this chemical was so strong that even those who tried to resuscitate the victims using artificial respiration died of poison themselves. The sale of this chemical has already been banned in numerous countries, but certain developing countries still used it. I was able to obtain it with Heart of Gold.

“If it was normal poison, you would’ve noticed immediately, and would have dispelled it from your body. You might’ve even been able to get yourself an antidote in time. But at this point, no matter what you take, you can’t neutralize all the chemical effects taking

place in your body at the moment. And even if you stop time, you can't stop time for your lungs or the flow of blood in the body. You'd die in that case."

Thirty minutes had passed already. The poison should have been fully absorbed by now.

"Ah, by the way. I didn't just prepare paraquat. What's coming out now is gaseous mercury."

I watched him begin to panic, and threw several charred amethysts on the ground.

"And this is uranium."

I was kidding. It just looked similar to uranium, so perhaps I might be able to trick him? As I thought, the Thief's face paled even more and quickly leapt away from the crystals.

"The absorbed dose of radiation should be enough by now. I've been letting it leak into the room since a while back after all."

He really seemed to believe it, based on his facial expressions. Was he an idiot?

"Apologies for being unable to prepare any germs for you. Let's just go through with the original plan. 1. If you get caught my hands, you die. 2. If you try to get away using your power, you exhaust all your life and die. 3. You die from paraquat poisoning. 4.

You die from mercury poisoning. 5. You die from radiation exposure. 6. You die from chlorine poisoning.”

I began to diligently dump detergent all around him. I even managed to dump a few liters on the Thief himself. I threw an opened bottle of bleach on the detergent.

“Oh, and here’s a service.”

I dumped gasoline and styrofoam everywhere. This should create enough toxic gas. Lastly, I took out a flamethrower from the vault and grinned at the Thief.

“Let’s burn.”

Chapter 47. What Can Be Put Inside A Pocket

The Thief was stuck. It wasn't like his path was completely cut off, though. Death would surely come for him soon; that much was certain. But not now. This meant that his following actions were going to be very easy to predict.

“—Knife Edge Present.”

A blue halo formed over the Thief's head as he activated his power. This much is something I expected from him... An unnatural disconnect formed between my memory and sight, which told me that the Thief had stopped time once again.

He stopped time for around ten minutes, seeing what had just happened to the vault.

I stood up. I could see the Thief leaning against a wall on the other side of the vault. His head was now lined with streaks of white, but he didn't seem to be moving. He's not dead... Did he give up? Looking around, I found that the vault looked absolutely nothing compared to before the time stop. All the toxic materials had disappeared, along with the flamethrower in my hand.

So he used his artifact.

[Grand Thief's Vault]. Just like the saint's frog wallet, it could hold massive amounts of objects. The only difference from my

vault was that one could not go into the space inside. Well, I suppose a paradox would occur if you went inside a frog wallet while holding this frog wallet in your hand.

I could see multiple scratches on the walls from his attempted escapes. I could feel that I sustained some damage onto my body, but it wasn't enough to concern me.

What I could tell from the situation was that the Thief had struggled to the last of his strength.

Attack stats and defense stats were, in the end, just estimated numbers. They could be changed with enough willpower. It's just that... Even his attempt to change these numbers had failed. I approached the Thief and grabbed his collar. Seeing how he wasn't resisting at all, it seems like he has completely given up. I tried punching him once to wake him up, but he wasn't responding at all. He seemed more dead than alive. Perhaps saying this would wake him up?

“You asked me earlier if I thought I could take four days of torture. Why don't you try looking into the future one last time? I think you definitely have a chance of getting away from that one yourself.”

I'll let him choose his future himself. The Thief's eyes became focused again. His eyes trembled for a split second, then widened. I wonder what he was looking at?

“Kuh...!”

All of a sudden, his back shot back up. The man was drooling, and there was a crazy look on his face.

“Kihihi! Kihihihi!”

Was the future really that funny? After laughing to himself for quite some time, he took his hands and began to choke himself.

Creak, crack.

His muscles expanded. His reddened face seemed to be ready to explode.

Just what did I do to him?

Did I torture him? Maybe I deconstructed and reconstructed his body countless times? I was planning on seeing the effects of potions, so it's probably the latter. Though... It was actually pretty hard to kill yourself by choking yourself. I slapped the idiot awake, and watched him choke himself again. I wonder if he'd be able to kill himself by doing this continuously?

“Hmm... So it's just a waste of time.”

There was no fun in messing with him. He was missing... something soft, malleable, and yet bouncy to the touch. Something like the saint.

Crack.

I broke the Thief's neck as I lamented about how boring this was, and chucked his body into the vault. Necro told me to keep his corpse intact, after all. Unfortunately, I would probably have to share my profits with the other two this time. But since I did almost everything, I say I deserve most of the profits. I could go on a strike if they tried to take advantage of me again. I took a look at the back of my hand. This spade-like symbol on it was the Grand Thief's Vault. An artifact that was transferred to me the moment the Thief died.

“...”

I guess it's fair for me to give myself a bit of a bonus. Right, what did Necro even do this time? The saint, too, was more of an insurance this time anyway.

I justified myself as I entered the vault. There, after kicking a few toys and materials away, I activated the Grand Thief's Vault. I wonder how much is in...

Pshaaaaa!

A mountain of gold and various gems flooded the vault. Buried in a tidal wave of gold, the precious treasures inside came tumbling out of the vault, creating a sea of precious materials.

Just how much did this damn thief take...

After being carried out into the middle of the vault by the wave of gold, I stood up. The scene laid out in front of me was almost blinding. Dear lord. This much gold is just...

The amount of money this equates to is... still being calculated.

I slowly climbed up the gold mountain and I rolled myself down from it. I even tried throwing gold up into the sky for no reason. Ah, my flamethrower. It's here. Now that I look at it, I could find bits of styrofoam covered in gasoline everywhere as well. As I looked around to see what else there were, a message popped up in front of me.

...Nice. Most likely those two didn't even know how much money the Thief possessed. Would they believe me if I just told them the Grand Thief's Vault contained a billion dollars? A billion dollars is still a lot, right? I just need to convert it to cash before they see it.

Right, I'll do that.

Man, thank god I'm unable to feel guilt. After exiting the vault, I activated dematerialization to get out of this damn place. Hopefully it'll last long enough... My dematerialized body quickly rose out of the ground. My surroundings brightened, and I was out. I rematerialized. I stretched a little bit after doing so. Being stuck in that small area all this time made even the sunset seem excessively bright. Looks like all the soldiers in the area had decided to retreat.

“Ah, he’s out!”

The saint, who had been waiting for me outside, pointed at me and ran over immediately with Necro following behind her. They came up to me and... in perfect sync, kicked me in the abdomen and butt respectively.

What were they... what?

“Should’ve told us when you were done. You didn’t respond to our messages, so we were super worried, don’t you know? And we have a ton of stuff we need to deal with here.”

“You snuck away some cash for yourself, didn’t you? I’m good at noticing this shit! Spit it out, damn you! Spit it out!”

The two beat me diligently, but it didn’t really hurt anymore. Ah! Not true. The saint’s holy power still kind of hurt. I managed to escape their lynching, and shrugged.

“After we rest a bit. Let’s deal with this tomorrow. I want to rest. I earned it.”

“Bullshit! These wasted days add up to your entire life! Ah, looking at your face... Necro was right, damn it! You really did sneak away some cash! Do you even know how much I worked this time?!”

Really, the only thing these two are good at is sniffing out money... I looked down at the saint who was pulling on my clothes in mock anger. I grabbed hold of her head, and started pushing her down. All the while muttering 'you too, become small enough to fit inside my pocket' quietly to myself.

Chapter 48. Rewriting Fate – Round 1

“You’re leaving?”

“Yeah. I need to give them my report. In person.”

Necro told us that he would be going back to the Haze Republic at the entrance of our next destination, the [Stair Village]. The time was 6AM. It was an early morning, but there were still quite a lot of people running around, trying to prepare for a village festival. Demonic Walker, who managed to bring us all the way here, was watching all of this from the back.

“How long would it take?”

“Just two days, I think?”

“And here I thought I’d finally be free...”

Necro grinned after hearing my joke, and pointed at the saint.

“Ah, she’s staying.”

“Take her with you.”

The saint stepped on my foot for that. It didn’t hurt though. It stopped hurting after I had raised my defense stat.

“You two worked hard, so just rest till I get back, ok? Or come up with a plan for our next enemy. I don’t know. Ah, come to think of it, they’re starting the festival today, aren’t they? Why not go on a date?”

“Necro!”

The saint just screamed and glanced at me nervously. Did she take his words seriously just now? How regrettable. I had my own plans. I actually had quite a lot on my agenda.

“Ah. I’ll ask you one last time. Are you really fine with giving me everything other than the Thief’s equipment?”

Necro told me to just give him the Thief’s corpse and his items, without even bothering to ask what was in the Grand Thief’s Vault. The items all came up to about 450,000,000 dollars. It was a lot of money, sure, but compared to what was in the Grand Thief’s Vault, just pitiful change. Necro narrowed his eyes and threw a question at me.

“You already digested all of it, didn’t you? Were you even going to give me some if I asked for it?”

“Course not.”

“I’m fine with just this. If you really feel that bad about it, talk to the girl over there. I’m the one who can’t understand why she

doesn't want anything."

In the beginning the saint was hounding me for the cash, but by the time I opened my mouth about it, she vehemently refused to take any. The girl answered the question on our heads when she realized that we were all looking at her.

"It'd be better for Mr. Murderer to have the money, is it not? Just like how wizards need mana, money-cians need cash."

"money-cian?"

"Because you use money to fight."

Her naming sense was at the same level as a jellyfish.

"I'll be taking it then...?"

I yelled gladly in my head. In my imagination, I was already swimming in an ocean of gold.

"Do what you want."

Necro said this, and motioned the Demonic Walker to ready himself.

"In any case, I'll be going. Contact me if anything goes wrong."

“No way anything would happen.”

Good. Finally some time to organize a few things. I'll sort the items I acquired this time, and convert all the gems and gold to money. Ah, I'll have to clean up as well. After saying my farewells to Necro, I took out a house from the vault. I'll be staying here till he comes back.

“Where's my room? Please take me to the bestest and the biggest one in the house!”

The saint demanded that she get a room after following me inside.

...Should I kick her out?

I pointed her to the bathroom, but the ungrateful girl began to storm through all the rooms in the first floor. I let the beast be in the first floor, and went up to the library on the second floor.

Peace and quiet, finally.

I sat down on a wooden chair, and moved to the vault. After taking a good look at the mountain of treasure laid out before me, I absorbed it all into my hand. The numbers quickly rose as I absorbed more and more gold. Was it because there was a lot of gold? The sound effect for the numbers going up wasn't 'kaching, kaching' anymore, but rather 'kachichiching'. After around three

minutes, all of the valuables in the vault had been sold, and the money I was left with was 32,527,076,503.60 dollars. A jolly fanfare played out in my ears, and a window appeared in front of me.

<Level up! [Heart of Gold (Lv.3)] has become [Heart of Gold (Lv.5)].>

<Gained a new ability.>

It wasn't 32 billion for nothing. I leveled up twice. Well, I suppose I could also ask why I just leveled up twice with this much money. Just how much money would it take to advance to level six... Well, let's think about that later. I'll check my new abilities for now.

[Gold Achieves All = Heart of Gold] – An ability to do anything with money.

– [Lv.1] Trade (Buy, Sell)

– [Lv.2] Purchase (Luck, Talent, Appearance, Charm, Health, Skill, Knowledge, Information, Ability, Life)

– [Lv.3] Finance (Exchange, Savings, Checking, Checks, Loan, Vault, Stocks, etc.)

- [Lv.4] Service (Delivery, Business Trip, Vacation, Lodge, Entertainment, Sports, Medicine, Transportation, etc.)
- [Lv.5] Employment (Job Ad, Request)

So my new abilities this time are [Service] and [Employment]...
Let's take a look at service first.

[Service] – Delivery: Chinese, Japanese, Fried Chicken...

– Business Trip: Massages, Thigh Pillows...

– Vacation: Sauna, Onsen...

– Lodge: Motel, Villa, Hotel...

– Entertainment: Karaoke, Amusement Park, Casino...

– Sports: Health Club, Swimming Pool, Ski Resort...

– Medicine: Pharmacy, Plastic Surgery, General Hospital...

– Transportation: Taxi, Cruise Ship, Airplane...

Ah, I get it. It's an ability that allows me to make use of certain services. Mm, it's a little strange to be calling it an ability, now that I look at it.

I wonder what vacation and lodge is like...?

I tried clicking [Hotel] in the menu without hesitation. The white vault I was in instantly became colored, and the scenery began to change. Soon enough, my body was standing on top of a marble floor. I was in a hotel lobby. The people around me paused for a second to take a look at my appearance. Wait. This familiar scenery is...

No way.

The clothes that the people are wearing, and the words written on the wall. All of these are things that I recognized.

“Could it be...?”

I frantically looked around, then rushed out of the hotel. It was early evening outside. A white man that I almost bumped into frowned at me annoyedly.

“Hey, be careful.”

No way. This easily... When I saw the hotel's name written on the entrance, I almost fell back in shock.

[Hotel Manhattan]

I had arrived in New York City.

*

To think I could go back that easily... After returning to the vault, I fell deep into my thoughts. The money that was taken out of my wallet after going to the hotel was 100,000 dollars... That should be the amount of money I had to use to cross dimensions. Where would I end up if I exit the vault? Would I end up in NYC, or in the other world? Is the reason my head didn't explode despite being away from the saint because I was in a different dimension?

I began cleaning the vault to try to calm myself. I put items I no longer needed in one corner, and organized the books and pieces of equipment as well.

...I suppose there's only one way to find out. After stepping out of the vault, I opened my closed eyes.

“Phew...”

Thankfully, I was back in the library. Quite a bit of time seemed to have passed, seeing how the sun was setting out the window already.

I thought I couldn't come back.

I sat back down in the chair out of relief. What just happened felt like a dream.

New York... This was how powerful Heart of Gold was? Powerful enough to cross dimensions this easily?

For a while, I was stuck in a state of shock. Eventually, I managed to shake my way out of it. Right, if immortality and the power to control time existed, it would make sense for this kind of illogical ability to exist as well. What was important was that 'it was possible'.

I crossed my legs, and put my hand on my knee. I still had 32 billion dollars. There were quite a lot of things that I still had to check out.

This time... Right, should I try buying myself a life?

I might revive if I just spent 10 billion. But... After thinking a bit, I decided that it wasn't worth it.

It wasn't like being alive was particularly good.

And more importantly, the advantages of being a corpse would disappear. It wasn't like I trusted Necro to revive me, but there was no need to rush things any more than I did now. If I was going to fight the Hero, it would be better for me to just increase my

defense stat or my health stat.

Ah, instead of that. Maybe I should try buying luck? Currently, my luck stat was 1. It would cost 990 million dollars to raise the stat to a 100. The problem was, I wasn't sure if this stat was a "consumable" or a "permanent" stat. Plus, there might be side effects that comes with the stat. A one person's fortune is the misfortune of another.

For example, if I managed to get first place in a raffle, a child who wanted to get first place and let his parents go on a vacation would become despondent. Mm, that would most certainly be the case.

I'll buy it.

<Your luck stat has risen by 99 points.>

[Luck] – Your luck stat is currently 100.

– You can pull out a joker card every time you pull out a random card from a deck.

I tried observing myself using the floating eye. There was no visual change to my outer appearance. I considered flipping a coin to test its effects, then paused when I heard someone walk up the staircase.

Knock, knock.

The saint peeked in through the door after knocking.

“Mr. Murderer~ Are you still busy?”

Did she cook? I could smell something from the first floor. I see. I’m dead, so I don’t have to eat, but the saint does. It’s dinnertime now, so I suppose she had breakfast and lunch by herself.

“I made dinner using the ingredients I got from town. I thought we could eat together.”

The saint, who had an apron around her, said this with a bright smile. So she knew how to cook...? I’m finding that hard to believe.

“I can’t eat.”

“Can’t you just put on the devourer ring?”

Ah, I haven’t thought of that. Well, putting on the devourer ring would most certainly allow me to eat despite not having a digestive organ. Just like the saint, who didn’t have intestines.

But.

Something like a meal... It's just annoying.

"I don't need it."

I waved her away after saying this. I didn't have any time to waste. There were more important things to do. The saint's shoulders drooped down, and after hesitating by the door for a bit, she looked down. She looks quite sad. Well, whatever.

"Get out, I'm busy."

I had things to do. And I didn't like being bothered.

I could eat later after I revived anyway.

I looked at the closed door in front of me, and put my chin on my hands. Nothing really lucky happened despite having pushed my luck stat to a 100.

Chapter 49. Rewriting Fate – Round 2

“You’re leaving?”

“Yeah. I need to give them a report. In person.”

Necro told us that he would be going back to the Haze Republic at the entrance of our next destination, the [Stair Village]. The time was 6AM. It was an early morning, but there were still quite a lot of people running around, trying to prepare for a...

[———]

Something was wrong. I couldn’t quite put my finger on it, but something felt strange. My thought process stopped for a second due to the peculiar feeling in my head. Why? Why did I just think that something was off? No matter how much I thought about it, I couldn’t tell why.

“What? Are you getting sad?”

Necro misunderstood my silence and tried making fun of me. I just ignored him and observed the town with the floating eye.

The color of the sky made it seem like it had almost frosted over. The lone mountain in the background seemed to have been dyed with tones of red and brown. The town atop of this mountain that could be accessed by a giant staircase was Stair Village, our current location.

Like the Arachne, our next destination, [Sky Island] wasn't a place Demonic Walker could take us to. It was impossible to access this floating island without jumping off the top of this "half" mountain.

Right. That's why we came here. In order to take down our next enemy, the Summoner.

The people preparing for the festival frantically made their way to their destinations on the main road, which had brick houses lined up on its sides. It didn't look like much. Again, I felt the strange feeling in my head and became confused.

This was the first time I had ever come to this town. I've never seen it in a picture, nor have I ever gone to a place that looked like it before. I must be mistaken...

"How long would it take?"

"Just two days, I think?"

"And here I thought I'd finally be free..."

After saying my farewells to Necro, I took out a house from the vault. I should use this time to do something useful. I'll clean up the vault and plan out how to destroy my next enemy.

“Where’s my room? Please take me to the bestest and the biggest one in the house!”

The saint followed me inside like a little cat, pulling on my robe. I should have kicked her out at the entrance... Well, she let me have her share of the money, so I guess I can at least let this go.

“How about this room? It has a clean marble floor and running water. Look, it even has a giant mirror.”

I was almost exorcised by the saint after leading her to the bathroom. Did she hate it that much? By now, she had completely ignored the house owner’s attempts to stop her and began to search the rooms herself.

...I guess I can let her play by herself.

I walked up to the library at the second floor and activated the Heart of Gold. I organized the vault that had turned into a mess from taking out the Thief and began to check on the money that I had acquired.

Total balance: 31,537,076,503.60 dollars.

The abilities that I gained this time were Service and Employment. They offered...

[Service] – Delivery: Chinese, Japanese, Fried Chicken...

– Business Trip: Massages, Thigh Pillows...

– Vacation: Sauna, Onsen...

– Lodge: Motel, Villa, Hotel...

– Entertainment: Karaoke, Amusement Park, Casino...

– Sports: Health Club, Swimming Pool, Ski Resort...

– Medicine: Pharmacy, Plastic Surgery, General Hospital...

– Transportation: Taxi, Cruise Ship, Airplane...

Business trip... Do I get to call someone here? Like summoning a person from a different world? I returned to the library and selected “ear cleaning” from the business trip section.

I didn’t choose it for any special reason, if anything. I was just curious. After a bit of a pause, a screen with a list of available individuals popped up. I suppose I can just choose whatever. 100,250 dollars disappeared from my account when I chose someone.

Why is it so expensive...? Is it because dimensional travel costs a lot?

A bright light flashed before me as I was thinking, and a cat-eared girl in maid clothes appeared before me. It didn't seem like she was cosplaying. Her cat ears twitched every once in awhile in a lifelike fashion, even her tailed looked like it was alive. Well, apart from her cat features, she seemed completely human. The girl did a spin as soon as she was summoned and struck a cute pose.

“Thank you for using our services! We're the mobile ear cleaners, the Ear Clea-nyas!”

The language that had been translated by xenoglossy was something that I had never heard before in my life. It... Didn't seem particularly special though. Other than the fact that her cat ears and tail were real.

She's definitely not from earth. And based on her facial expressions, she didn't seem very surprised at the fact that she had been summoned.

“The service lasts a minimum of thirty minutes. It costs extra to hire us for any longer, so please make sure of that, master.”

I wonder what would happen if I killed her? Would she be unsummoned before then? Or would I not be able to harm her? Is there a penalty? Why isn't she surprised that she's in a different world?

A message box appeared below me, which I checked immediately.

[The service becomes cancelled the moment you attempt to harm the person. Any small talk and physical contact other than what is required to fulfill the service is forbidden, and breaking this rule will result in a penalty in using the services at a later time.]

Is that so... So I can only take what they give me. The cat girl kneeled down on the floor, and motioned me to lie down.

Is there something special involved? Or does she really just clean my ears? There's no way I just paid a hundred thousand dollars just to get my ears cleaned... Right? I took off my helmet and lay down on the girl's knees. I carefully observed the girl's cat tail that waved back and forth as my ears got cleaned. A mix between a cat and human... Maybe she was a robot. I don't feel any mana inside her.

“Can I ask you something?”

Crackle, crish. The girl didn't respond, and just dug at my ears as much as she could. She said a few incoherent things about crepes and TV programs while she did so. I thought of attacking her for a second, then remembered the warning that Heart of Gold gave me. To think my money would be wasted on something like this...

After thirty minutes.

The girl had finished her business with me and disappeared after saying a generic thank you.

I feel cheated.

The time was now 11:30AM. I sat back down on the chair, then lifted my head when I heard someone run up the stairs.

“Mr. Murderer~ Are you there? Ah, you must have finished with your business in the vault.”

The saint peeked into the room, paused, then began to smell with her eyes closed.

“A female... I smell a female.”

Was she a dog...? Did she smell the perfume or something? The saint scanned my body carefully. She seemed to have a small frown on her face.

“Could it be...”

“Nope, not what you’re thinking.”

“Ah! I was planning on buying a few things at the town... I was wondering if you’d want to join me.”

“To do what, carry the baggage?”

The saint nodded vigorously, and I waved her away with a similar amount of energy.

“You can go alone. I’m busy.”

The saint drooped her shoulders once again when she heard my rejection, and...

...Once again?

The saint making a sad face didn’t seem unfamiliar to me. Did she make the face when we were at the shelter? Or when I took down Romeo Smith? When I took down the Thief? The saint uttered a small “sorry” under her breath, then quietly left the room.

Mm... It’s probably nothing.

It’s probably just my imagination. I must be imagining that the ‘day is repeating’.

No way that’s the case, right?

Ah. Maybe I should have just offered to [deliver] the food for her? I feel like I could have eaten with her if I used the devourer ring. I

imagined me eating a meal with her together at a table, causing me to smirk.

Why'd I think of doing something like that? It was meaningless. There was no worth in doing something like that. What was important to me right now was to check the extent of my power, and think of ways to use the money I had acquired.

Right now, each and every minute was worth tens of thousands of dollars to me. If I invested using this money, every minute would be worth hundreds of thousands. Using such precious time with the saint?

Useless. Inefficient. Illogical.

I activated Heart of Gold as I crossed my legs. As I did so, I tried to ignore the saint appearing at the edge of my thoughts as much as I could.

Chapter 50. Rewriting Fate – Round 3

It was 6 AM again. I checked my wristwatch and came to the conclusion that the day was repeating. I can't even deny that it's happening since my memory of it was so clear.

Was it because I killed the Thief? Did he put a curse on me before he died?

The fact that I was 'being attacked', despite not having been wounded yet, wasn't a particularly good feeling. I have no idea what might happen if I get stuck in a time loop like this.

"Hey! You listening? I'm going away! Wow, you're not even pretending to be sad? I thought you were better than this."

I consoled Necro a little bit then sent him away. I threw the saint in the biggest room in the house as soon as I took it out. She complained a little, but became satisfied after hearing that it was the biggest. She said that she'd rearrange the furniture as she saw fit, so she probably won't bother me for too long.

Now, let's go find the reason for this damn temporal anomaly.

I activated the Thousand Thunderbirds so that I could attack the enemy as soon as I found him. I also used my Floating Eye to scan everyone in Stair Village. I could see the smoke billowing out of the chimneys below. The streets were crowded with people trying to prepare for the festival.

It has to be one of these people.

The person I'm looking for has to be a person using his power. If it was powerful enough to turn back time by one day, his or her halo should be shining brightly. I slowly began to scan the surrounding area but gave up soon afterwards.

“Why...?”

There were three or four people from a different world in the town, but none of them had abilities related to time. The person might be using the power from outside the village, but... That's too unlikely.

Is it magic?

If that were the case then it would make sense for me to not find anyone suspicious. If the person hide the mana, I wouldn't be able to find the person. But could there actually be a magic that rewinds time...

Well, I guess I'll stop here for today.

By now, it was already 6PM. Streetlights began to be turned on in the town, signaling the start of the night market. Colored lanterns hanging from strings above gave the town a festive vibe.

The day should repeat by now.

I began to look into everyone we had met during our trip. As I did so, a knock came from the door, causing me to look up.

“Mr. Murderer~ Are you still busy?”

The saint came again. The loop ends at 9PM. I could search the town for the last three hours, but...

“I made dinner using the ingredients I got from town. I thought we could eat together.”

“I don’t...”

I stopped myself from saying ‘I don’t want to’. The face of the depressed saint became stuck in my head for some reason. If the day’s going to repeat anyway... Maybe I could take some time off. Since we’re going to go out, I suppose some checks should be done.

“Did you turn off...”

The stove? I realized something before I even finished my question.

“There’s no gas and there’s no electricity either... Did you use magic?”

“Hehe, don’t you know that I’m the strongest white wizard there is? If I just use light magic well enough... Boiling water is but a simple task.”

Ah, lasers, is it. To think she’d use light to heat food... I don’t know if I should say it’s amazing or stupid... Anyway, that’s not what’s important here.

“Do you have time? I’d like to try something.”

“What is it? Is it Heart of Gold again?”

If my memory was correct, I made use of service in order to go back to my previous world. If I could take someone else with me, I could potentially send back people who wanted to go back to their original world. For a fee, of course.

“You’ll see.”

I extended my hand towards her. I’ve never tried it before, but it felt like it’d work if I held onto her hand like this. Kind of like how I could store things in the vault. The saint looked down at my hand silently, then grabbed onto my finger shyly. She’s usually so unreserved when she hits me. Why’s she so shy now?

“Hold on tight. Like this. As if we’re shaking our hands.”

I firmly grasped her hand. She became shaky and nervous when I did this, which I promptly ignored. I activated Heart of Gold. The

place where we were headed to now was the Multiplex. A place that combined a theater, restaurants, arcades, and a giant shopping town into one. The dark dimly-lit library melted away, only to be replaced by a large bright space. It seemed to be the first floor of the complex.

“Hahhh....”

The saint dropped down onto the floor from shock. She was still holding onto my hand tightly. A couple who just came out of the elevator glanced at us, whispering to each other.

“Look, look. That girl. Next to the guy.”

“Wow... Amazing! As expected of a foreign girl. Her cosplay’s on a completely different level. Is she a model?”

“...Let’s break up.”

I observed the saint’s clothes as I listened to the couple’s banter.

Cosplay...

Now that I look at it, her clothes are quite peculiar. People were occasionally stealing glances at us. Unlike the other world, which was currently fall, earth was currently in summer.

Maybe we should buy clothes first...

I picked up the saint and made her stand straight, because she had melted like ice cream on a hot summer day, and pulled her into the elevator. She was quite light. Was it because of her short height? Once the elevator closed, she stuck close to me like a frightened rabbit.

“Mr. Murderer! This is...?”

“Earth. Based on the language, probably Korea?”

“North?”

“South.”

Seeing how the last place I went to was New York, it seemed that the location changed based on the services offered. In any case... Why is she so close to me? I can almost feel her breathing on me. I grabbed the inquisitive saint, who was asking me all sorts of things out of excitement, and took her to the fifth floor, the women’s clothing section.

Again with the staring. Our clothes was one thing, but... She seems to be the main reason.

“Why here...? Aha, it’s a date, isn’t it? How nice of you, Mr. Murderer!”

I left her to interpret it however she wanted and let go of her hand to let her go buy her clothes.

...Hm?

Shake. Shake. The girl didn't let go of my hand even when I tried to shake it off. The saint whistled to herself loudly, as if she didn't know what I was trying to do. When we just stood in place like this, one of the employees began to approach us gingerly.

“Sir...? Is there anything that you might be looking for?”

Would he understand me? I guess having Xenoglossy solves that problem. And just like how I had suspected, the saint was able to converse with the employee easily, and finally choose a clothing store. At a place like this, I suppose what was expected to happen was...

The saint would probably try on a bunch of clothes and ask for my opinion.

Contrary my expectations however, the saint just chose a single set of clothes, and bought it using her own money. The employee seemed to be quite surprised when she handed him a gold coin.

It's my turn now.

I entered the men's clothing section on the fourth floor. Before I could even say anything though, I was stopped by a young security

guard.

“Apologies. You’ve been reported by a few of the employees here.”

“Reported...?”

I suppose it’s obvious that I’d be reported, considering how I was wearing a cape and a helmet. The cape might even be used to steal things. The wide-shouldered guard, who was wearing a police baton on his hip, looked up at my face suspiciously.

“Would you take off your helmet and cape, if it wouldn’t trouble you too much?”

Does he think that I might be a criminal? This isn’t good. The guard put emphasis on how checking my identity was extremely important as he continuously glanced at the saint.

I guess it’s unavoidable. I could say that the guard had no right to force me to do this, but doing such a thing would just end up being counterproductive.

When I took off my helmet, the guard stumbled a few steps back in surprise. My face that had been almost melted off from heat was not at all something that should be seen by anyone. It was absolutely abominable. The guard looked away a little bit as he spoke with a stiffer tone than before.

“Sir, apologies for this, but... Please put your helmet on again, and... Exit the building with me.”

Exit the building...?

“I look ugly, so leave?”

“You might cause discomfort for the other customers, so... Please understand.”

He was equivocating nicely, but he was clearly putting some force behind his words. It almost seemed like he was about to throw me out by force if needed. It wasn't hard to say no, but... I turned to look at the worried saint.

I wanted to let her have a nice day, too...

The situation just kept getting worse. Several customers became curious about what was going on and even decided to become part of the peanut gallery.

“Why does he look like that? Does he really want to come to a place like this with a face like that?”

“Wow, I feel like throwing up. Let's go, let's go. Damn it, why does he even go out with a face like that? He should just die.”

“I feel so sorry for the girl next to him. No, if she's with a guy like

him, she's clearly..."

So it's ok for me to be treated like this if I'm ugly, is it... Looks like arguing with the guard wouldn't really yield fruitful results either. I sighed and came back to the library on the second floor with the saint. The people around us disappeared and made what happened just before seem like a dream.

"Mr. Murderer..."

"Sorry, sorry. I troubled you with my looks."

The saint, who was still holding onto my hand, looked up at my face with worried eyes.

Hah...

Looks like I chose wrong 'again'. Maybe I should figure out a way to end this properly before I find the enemy? Maybe I'll find the right way to solve this problem that way.

Plus, I feel slightly... Just slightly,

Mad.

Chapter 51. Rewriting Fate – Round 4 (1)

“That’s what government work is like. It would be so much better to just send in reports through telepathy. Or you could just document it. But they really seem to want to see my face when I make the report.”

Necro was planning on droning on for a bit about the problems he had about his life to Jin. Seeing their face, it didn’t even seem like they were sad about him leaving... This made him feel a need to appeal his importance to the group when he got the chance.

“There’s no efficiency in this government. Only procedures. Useless procedures.”

Let’s tell Jin all about why he had to go back to the republic using this chance. Necro, who had been thinking this to himself, became a little dumbfounded when he saw Jin snatch Morto’s hand.

“Heart of Gold!”

The two disappeared with a flash, leaving Necro and Demonic Walker alone at the entrance of the village. Jin yelled “bye!” before he disappeared, so clearly this wasn’t an act of kidnapping or anything significant.

Seeing how they were holding hands...

Demonic Walker nodded several times and reached the one

conclusion Necro didn't want to reach.

“It's a date. Wow~ he just grabbed her hand as soon as he heard you were leaving. How nice! I didn't know he had that kind of side to him.”

Necro's shoulders drooped. For some reason, a ridiculous sense of loneliness overtook him. To think that Jin would actually pull something like this on him... Since when did he become like that?

“...Let's go.”

At one point, he was a hero during the great war. Demonic Walker put his hand on the depressed man's shoulder and activated his power.

*

As soon as I entered the vault, the saint began jumping like a kangaroo in a defensive stance.

“Kyaa! What's this? Kidnapping?”

I left the girl to perform her mock martial arts in one corner of the vault and absorbed the mountain of gold. The amount totaled 31,537,076,503.60 dollars.

If my memory serves, I was missing 990,000,000 dollars.

This was most likely the reason why the day was repeating. An error most likely occurred due to the fact that I raised my luck to a hundred. But was there really a reason for fate to be twisted like this just because I raised my luck? Unless there was an external factor...

There was too little information that I could go off of. I guess I'll just stop here for now. The saint approached me carefully and looked up at my helmet.

“Mr. Murderer...? If you don't answer properly, you might start giving people the wrong impression?”
“Hold on, I'm almost done.”

I opened Heart of Gold and chose charm. It's not like I needed a new face, so I'd be satisfied enough with just turning myself back to my former self.

...Wait.

Maybe I can take care of my skin troubles a little bit? I should also adjust a few things... Yeah, something like the me I see through my bathroom window...

I felt my facial structure change as I became enveloped in a warm light. I took off my helmet. The saint, who had been watching what I was doing from the side, widened her eyes in shock.

Was something wrong?

I took a look at my face using the floating eye. Mm... It's exactly as I had expected. Just what I'd expect to see on my bathroom window.

My bald head had turned into a huge jungle of hair, and the burns on my skin had all but faded away. I changed into my T-shirt and jeans immediately and put my hands on the confused saint's shoulders. She trembled as if she had been in shock and tried to run away.

What's up with her? Does she not like it?

This was the first time she had seen my real face. Since she only got to see my burnt self before, I must feel like an entirely different individual.

"What, you don't like it?"

"...Is it really you, Mr. Murderer? You seem like a different person."

"Isn't that much obvious?"

It's not like there's anyone else that would use "Heart of Gold". Plus, she even saw me change in front of her. Why was she so confused? I tightly grabbed onto her shoulder and moved to the Multiplex.

The scenery melted away to take us to the first floor of the building. Was moving like this alright? Everyone would've noticed us moving. Like now. The couple waiting for the elevator in front of us turned to stare at us. Their heads all seemed to be stuck in place, as if time had stopped.

Like I thought, I suppose it was too strange. Because we appeared so suddenly? Or was it because the saint was too pretty?

I don't really get that. The only thing that the saint reminds me of is a small animal...

“Hah...”

The saint dropped down onto the ground again, which forced me to grab her up. Seeing her reddened face, she was definitely embarrassed. Well, I guess holding her up myself like this was embarrassing for her. As we quietly waited for the elevator, the couples near us began to talk.

“He must be an actor... Was there a signing event today? Should I get his signature?”

“What do I do~! He looked at me!”

“Wow, he's seriously something. Eh? Dear friend, since when did you look so much like a squid?”

“If only I was born like that...”

An actor?

I looked behind me but didn't see anyone special. Well, it wasn't like I knew what all the actors in the world looked like anyway, and even if I did, why would I care? I checked the wristwatch of the person next to me and confirmed that it indeed was 10AM. Seeing how there were a lot of people on the streets, it seemed to be the weekend.

Ding.

One of the elevators reached the first floor and the people inside the elevator got off. The very first couple stopped right in their tracks when they saw us. They were forced to keep moving due to the people behind them, but they just kept staring even while moving.

Was something wrong?

My clothes are pretty clean... A white T-shirt and a pair of jeans. Ah, was it because the saint's clothes seemed too foreign? The people in the building kept glancing at us as they moved.

We really should buy some clothes first.

In any case... Everyone in the elevator got off, so why's no one moving? Was the elevator broken? For some reason the people

split apart to form a path for us to the elevator. Almost as if they were telling us to get on first.

“...Excuse us.”

Since it was dangerous for me to touch the saint directly, I grabbed her clothing and dragged her in. Even after we got on, the people outside didn't bother moving. They were just taking pictures with their smartphones.

“Wow... Amazing.”

“The real thing can't even compare...”

Was it really that strange? Well, the saint was a foreigner, so it was a little expected. I assumed that her clothes would get a little attention, but not this much...

No one bothered to move despite the elevator's signal. Really, what was up with them? Was something the matter? We'll just go to the fifth floor for now. The door closed causing the scenery to change. I could feel the increase in force from elevator moving upwards.

“ ... ”

The saint didn't say anything in the elevator. In fact, she just kept trying to run to one corner of the elevator. This was the same even when we got to the women's clothing section. Since she tried

to pick out whatever without even looking at it, I chose what she had eyed previously and bought it. Since the money would reset after the day, I guess I could squander a bit today. I heard people muttering behind us, so I turned to look at all the people who had gathered.

Was there anything to look at?

I recalled what had happened previously. At that time, the people were staring at me with eyes filled with disgust, but now their eyes were filled with curiosity.

Right, I suppose this was good enough appearance-wise.

To think people would change this much just by changing my face... I guess it would be unfair to insult them for judging people by appearances. After all, I, too, was one of the many people in the world who judged people based on their appearances.

“Super handsome!”

A female student who had been following me from the fifth floor yelled this loudly. Are they all usually like this? She was beginning to embarrass me. I told the saint, who seemed equally embarrassed, to go change and walked over to the counter. A young female worker bowed politely to me again and spoke with a trembling voice.

“Um... Sir. D-do you... Need anyone to h-help you?”

“Why?”

“Ah th-that’s, I was wondering if you’d be able to carry all this...”

Hm. Did they have a service like this? Was she planning on calling a porter? I guess I did buy a little too much. And I was planning on buying even more. I could just put it in the vault but... Doing it in a place like this would cause a mess. I wasn’t really planning on causing one.

“Please, by all means.”

I smiled and took out a black card that was given to me from the Finance section of my power. Royal Centurion. A VVIP card that was used by a select few people. The employee scanned the card a few times, then called someone on the phone. A man in a black suit ran to the counter in just thirty seconds. The name tag on his chest showed me that he was the manager of this multiplex.

“I apologize!”

The man bent at the waist by ninety degrees to bow at me. There wasn’t much to apologize about though... There was a familiar person next to the manager. It was the security guard that told me to leave after looking at my face. The manager kept bowing at me.

“Our employee didn’t know much. We’ll help you with your purchase as fast as we can. I’ve contacted the management already,

so once you're done shopping, I'll take care of your purchases at the entrance."

What was he on about? Was he planning on waiting at the entrance with a card reader at the entrance...? I turned to look at the guard next to him.

"This is...?"

"Ah! In order to enhance your experience here, this man here will help you as much as possible while you shop. He can lift heavy things quite easily. Is there anything you're worried about...? I could change him to someone else if you'd like."

He seemed quite careful with his words. To think a single card would do this... Since he was giving me a porter for free, how could I refuse him.

"Just stay out of my sight."

"Of course!"

The guard quickly bowed when the manager motioned him to. He looked completely different compared to the time when he was trying to chase me out. This was the power of money. I left the two people and walked over to the dressing room. The saint was wearing a set of summer clothes with a beet red face.

"How... How is it...? Does it look good?"

She looks completely different with the one piece dress compared to her usual self with the red jacket and blue cape like this. But...

“Something’s missing.”

I snapped my fingers and asked the employee to bring me a set of women’s shoes. A row of shiny shoes were put on display for her from one end of the store to the other. I spoke once the shoes were all set in front of her.

“Choose. Ten seconds.”

I’ll just buy all of them if she couldn’t choose and just give them all to the guard. I don’t know if he’d be able to carry it, but...

Doesn’t matter to me, does it?

Chapter 52. Rewriting Fate – Round 4 (2)

“Ten seconds?”

The saint quickly got to work when I began the countdown. She happily muttered “what do I choose...?” under her breath. The shoe that she chose in the end was a pair of high heels that didn’t match her dress at all. The heels were high enough to raise her height by about seven centimeters. Was she she trying to look as tall as possible...? I didn’t know she longed for fresh air that much.

Even so, it looks like she might fall over with a pair of heels that high.

I looked around a bit and chose a smaller pair of shoes for her. They were a pair of a flat shiny white shoes that seemed to really match her white fleece skirt.

“Isn’t this better? I’m not sure you can even walk in those.”

“Hah? What you just said was a very big insult to my womanhood!”

Womanhood...? Does she want to grow that much? The saint became enraged and grabbed her high heels.

“I can take a high heel you know? Even a keel heel is nothing to me! I can take keel heels and even area heals with ease!”

Again with the wordplay. The saint laughed at me with the keel heel on and I just shook my head in response. Was she supposed to be a clown or what? She chose the high heels against everyone's will and took off her shoes.

Ah, was she...

The saint put her hands in her skirt as everyone watched and took off her tights. The black cloth rolled away to reveal a white leg. She stood up like a crane on one leg and attempted to take off the other one from her other leg. Wasn't she embarrassed...?

As I watched her in stupefaction, the saint laughed quietly to herself and stomped over to me.

"To think you'd look at me with those eyes... As I thought, high school girls really are premium products. Right, I'll give this to you as a reward. Please treat it preciousy. Ah! Maybe you can use this as your family heirloom."

She was trying to give me her stocking. It even smelled because of the summer heat.

"I don't want it!"

I threw it down on the ground as soon as I got it.

“Nom!”

The saint took a giant bite out of her pancake and had a smile on her face while putting her hands around her cheeks. A pancake topped with corn salad, a corn dog, along with ketchup and mustard. It was just \$2.5 dollars. She downed it in two bites and began to search for her next target. The whole time she was doing this, she kept glancing at me with a guilty face.

“Cah I hah oh moh pleh?”

“Swallow first. Don’t speak with your mouth full.”

She eats a lot. Why does it feel like I’m raising a cow? The two of us went up to the seventh floor and I began to feed the saint out of curiosity just to see how much she could eat. The eighth floor is a cinema complex, so... I guess we’re going to watch a movie next?

Feels kind of boring.

I shoved bacon sticks and fries into her mouth as I thought about the movie we were going to watch.

Nom nom.

She really eats like a whale. Kinda like pacman. She probably would’ve eaten my hand if I wasn’t paying attention. The saint

noticed that I was observing her curiously as I shoved more food into her and handed me a stick of roast meat.

“Heh~ So you’re finally feeling hungry, Mr. Murderer? You should eat. Ahh~”

“Don’t have to. I don’t feel hungry and I can’t taste anything anyways.”

She kept trying to push it in despite me closing my mouth tightly. My face became covered with sauce thanks to that.

“You’ll be able to taste a little if I put a shining buster through your mouth.”

“Words can be violence too damn it!”

She really did whatever she wanted. I ended up taking the stick and activated Heart of Gold. I bought the Devourer Ring from the special equipment section. It would look like a couple’s ring if I put it on my ring finger, so I’ll put it on my middle finger.

Well, we still look like a couple like this.

We just look like one of course.

I had zero feelings for the saint. I, who had no ‘heart’ to begin with, would probably never end up loving someone. For now, I was

planning on satisfying her, so that... She wouldn't get in my way—so that I could focus.

Her memory would reset by the end of the day.

In the end, all this was just being done to satisfy myself. To the saint, all this was completely meaningless.

Hm, in any case...

“Annoying.”

I quietly looked at the people around us. No matter where we went, people followed. They weren't just following us either. They were taking pictures with their smartphones without trying to hide it. Did they really have that little to do? The saint slipped when she didn't pay attention falling down on the ground with a gasp. We were surrounded with the clamor of shutter sounds again.

As I thought, she wasn't used to the high heels. Why did she pick it then? The reason why people decorated themselves was to look good to a person. The conclusion I reached therefore, was obvious.

To look good in front of me.

No, that delusion is just too big. It shouldn't have hurt that much, but she was crying like a baby as she extended her arms at me. I remember something like this happening before. Back when

we were setting the barrier to trap the Warrior.

I told her to get up on her own at the time, but...

I grabbed her arms and helped her up. My hands caught fire when I grabbed hers and I was filled with pain. At the same time, I could feel her warmth along with the soft feeling of her hand.

“What the, look! Look!”

“Fire...”

The audience muttered amongst themselves when they saw the holy flame. Well, it's not like it matters if they see it. I could just call it a magic trick.

“...Than... You.”

She said thanks with an almost silent voice. She had turned beet red from embarrassment as she dusted off her clothes. Whatever happened to her crying earlier? Anyway, I suppose I should give her a new pair of shoes... I snapped my fingers and asked the guard to take out the white flats. When I pushed the pair onto her, she ended up putting her feet towards me after a bit of initial resistance. Was she trying to be cinderella or something?

“You wear it.”

“You weren’t going to put it on?”

“Why should I?”

The saint’s face turned even redder than before when I refused her outright. Well, it was obvious where this was all going. I refused her despite knowing that. After all, even it was me, putting on shoes for a woman was... a little awkward.

Chapter 53. Rewriting Fate – Round 4 (3)

The Fighter, Vahn, thought of the warmth from the hands that caressed him. He remembered the warmth that resembled the spring sun as well as the kindness that didn't care to be repaid.

Morto Hai.

She, the strongest white wizard in the world, saved Vahn as he lay dying on the streets. She could have just ignored him. But she didn't. Instead, she took him, a person she had never even seen before, and nursed him back to full health for four days straight. How could he forget? Even now he could see her kind smile when he closed his eyes. Even her pained and saddened face— he could see it all.

—If there was one thing he could ask for from god, it would be her happiness.

He hadn't repaid her yet. He wanted to stay near her and help her, but his worries of dragging her down only made him watch her from afar.

‘At least now...!’

He put on the arm guards that had video game pads inscribed on it. After that, he put on a noose around his neck like a convict and stood on his toes.

Not yet.

Not yet.

He repeated this phrase to himself a countless number of times as if he was attempting to persuade death. He wanted to give this life to Morto if he could, but he knew better than anyone that he didn't have long to live in the first place. If he were to do anything, he only had this one chance. If he failed again, he would need to pay for all he had done up till now.

[Rewriting Fate = Save & Load]

Even with the ability to save at a certain point in time and move back into the past, he had failed in saving Morto. The reason was simply because he didn't have enough talent. There was no other way to explain it.

If only he had been a better person... If only he was a person worthy enough to stand next to her with pride...

Useless thoughts. Vahn felt the sun beginning to set and looked up. What came into view was a panoramic view of the stair village. His eyes drifted over to a small house at the edge of this village.

‘Please...’

For a future filled with happiness. So that the two won't be played by fate. The boy atop the mountain repeats his life over and over again.

Almost as if he's stuck in a neverending dream.

*

A scary movie in the theaters. That was the rule that I set for myself. It wasn't because I wanted to see the saint get scared. Well, I wouldn't mind looking at it. But the saint managed to shatter my expectations completely and just watched the movie with a neutral face as she munched on her caramel popcorn.

“Hah!”

She occasionally let out a laugh.

This was not at all what I expected. To think she'd be this desensitized to this sort of thing... I suppose even the scariest ghosts look like weak monsters to her. They wouldn't even stand a chance against her either. There was no reason for her to be afraid of something that was weaker than her. Even so, to think that she wouldn't even try to look scared...

Whenever the others screamed “kya”, the saint raised the corners of her lips to let out a ‘heh’. Like this, she resembled a seasoned exorcist. It's not like she was going so far as to start talking about how she'd take care of the ghosts but... This was bad

enough to make the movie director cry.

Slurp, slurp.

The saint sucked up everything in her cup in one fell swoop and glared at the whimpering couple near her. Based on the light in her eyes, it almost seemed like she was about to do something. She was occasionally glancing at me too. Don't tell me she was about to act scared now...

“Kya~”

She was half a beat too late compared to the others. She was bad at acting too. She attempted to hug me with a face more full of excitement than anything. I put my hand on her forehead and stopped her.

Fwoosh.

The theater became slightly brighter as a blue flame lit my hand. At the same time, everyone in the theater turned to look at the saint. The saint's eyes instantly became filled with confusion and chaos. She put down her hands, and slowly buried herself into the chair. She must be embarrassed. Embarrassed enough to look like a steamed octopus.

...I still don't get it.

Was it possible for a person to like another of its kind with pure

emotions? Were they not confusing their desires to reproduce? What was their reason for even liking someone?

I felt that there was something wrong with me as a human. There probably won't ever be a day when I would understand the saint's feelings.

Not that I wanted to in the first place.

We moved back down after the movie. The floor we were on was a floor dedicated to albums and books. There was a book cafe in one corner, so we took a seat there. The saint swung her legs back and forth playfully in her seat and tried on a headband that she had just bought.

Was this the new fad nowadays...? A motor that moved according to the brainwaves of the wearer.

The cat ears on the hairband were flapping around wildly. It was probably trying to convey the saint's current emotions.

"Look, look, Mr. Murderer. I'm going to stop your heart with these cat ears!"

She took a magical girl pose she saw from a TV show and attempted to look cute. Again, the people around us shouted 'cute' and madly took pictures.

She's totally an idol.

When she pretended to shoot me with a finger gun, the males behind me fell back with an “ugh”.

What the hell...?

“Now, now, Mr. Murderer! You should try wearing this as well.”

I pushed the cat ears away.

“Don’t want to.”

“Shining...”

She was resorting to threats. Despite saying the key words, she didn’t actually gather any mana. I suppose she was a little unsure about using it in public like this.

“You’re too shy.”

The saint said this as she put the headband back into its box.

“Mr. Murderer, you talk too little. You never let out anything that you’re thinking, do you?”

“There’s not much to talk about.”

We didn't have a shared interest either. The saint became worked up.

"Why wouldn't there be anything to talk about? We could talk about what we like, or we could talk about what happened recently. It's quite fun to learn about what a person likes. For example, you like detective novels don't you? I enjoy circling the name of the criminal and marking down (↓ He's it) on the first chapter."

"That's evil!"

"I'm joking. Dear oh dear, do you really think I'd do something as cruel as that?"

You seem exactly like the type of person to do something like that... The saint took a sip from her iced coffee.

"Anyway, what's all this about? Normally you'd get extremely annoyed when I ask you to do anything with me."

So she knew how much I disliked being bothered. Well, I did show it quite a bit in the first place.

"There's a problem. I just escaped in order to find a way to solve it."

I explained everything that happened to the saint. Starting from the fact that the day has repeated three times, all the way to the

fact that I had raised my luck stat all the way to a hundred.

“I don’t know the cause for this. I just escaped here with you just in case this was an attack of some sort from the enemy. As long as we’re here, no physical harm should come to us.”

“What if it isn’t an attack?”

The saint’s remark caused a small ripple in my thoughts.

So it was just prejudice...

She was right. There might have been a probability that this was not an attack in the first place. Was this ability really being used to attack us? Repeating a day over and over again was, in some sense, giving us a chance to do something. It’s not that we’re trapped in a certain loop, but...

Does the person want something specific to happen?

If there was an enemy that we are to fight, the subject of the enemy’s power was “me”. I was the target. That would mean that in the end, the person was waiting for me to change in some way. But there was something that couldn’t be explained with this theory.

“What about my luck stat?”

“Dear, dear. To think you haven’t even noticed yet... Isn’t being able to date me a great fortune in itself?”

Right. I’m scrapping this theory. The saint was no help.

“Ah! I saw it, that face. You just thought I was no help didn’t you? To think you’d think such a thing in front of such a beautiful girl like me... How impudent! How impudent indeed!”

“Why would you try to impersonate a king at a time like this... Whatever. Even if we do have an enemy, we just have to endure it till he runs out of energy.”

“Then, after this day... Would this memory, d-disappear?”

The saint asked this question while her voice was trembling voice. Was she disappointed? That feeling would disappear as well.

“Of course it would. Without a trace.”

“I... See...”

What was she thinking? The saint smiled brightly as if to show that she was unfazed, but I could see that she was a little unenergetic compared to before. This isn’t ideal. The reason I brought her here in the first place was because I disliked seeing her like that. I stood up and told the saint to follow. The saint stopped fiddling with her paper cup and widened her eyes.

“What, where?”

The answer to that obviously would be...

“We’re going on a drive.”

I dragged the saint towards me. She had been fiddling with her fingers with the desire to grab my hand for quite some time. When I actually grabbed her hand, she became a little surprised and confused. My hand was burning in pain because of her holy power, but... I’d have to endure at least this much.

“Thank you for using our services! Please have a great day!”

When the hell did he get there? The manager, who had been waiting with a card reader in hand, followed us all the way outside to bid me his farewells. I received my car keys as soon as I walked out from an assistant. It took time to buy things using Heart of Gold, so I hired an assistant to buy the car for me.

Thankfully, he bought it just on time. The sportscar that was parked in front of the entrance of the multiplex was getting the attention of everyone nearby. There were a few people brave enough to get near it, but the only thing they dared to was to take a selfie with it.

A full-time 4WD 6.5L V12 engine. It does zero to a hundred km/h in 2.9 seconds, and boasts a maximum speed of 350km/h. The

flashy and sharp appearance that this car possessed was unique to only this car.

Lamborghini Aventador RED.

The crowd around it was muttering to themselves, wondering just who the owner of this car was.

Beep.

I unlocked the car with the smart key and opened the passenger door for the saint. The crowd let out gasps of astonishment from just this.

“Wow, did you just see that?”

“It must be his. He must have quite a lot of cash.”

The attention I was getting was almost annoying. Maybe I should've bought a cheaper car. When I confirmed that the saint was seated in the car, I closed the door. Her worries should be blown away after we go on a nice drive. Well, from the looks of things, her worries seemed to be gone already.

How simple.

I sat myself down in the driver's seat with a smile and started the car.

Chapter 54. Rewriting Fate – Round 5

Vahn squeezed out the last of his power from above the village. His halo slowly began to get brighter and brighter as it dyed the world in its light.

‘This is the last...!’

Once he dies, the Fighter Vahn would disappear from the face of the planet.

Almost as if he had never existed before.

This was the price he would pay for attempting to mess with fate. He would be forgotten by everyone once he died, but to Vahn, this was nothing. As long as she could become happy, he might as well have gone to heaven.

It was almost as if he was playing a roleplaying game. The boy who had saved and loaded his entire life multiple times slowly closed his eyes on top of the hill.

Waiting for the two people that would come here in the future.

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The white sand glittered under the transparent cobalt sky. The beach was lined with parasols along with people tanning under the

sun or resting underneath the shade. The waves splashed against the tetrapods lined up against the seaside road, turning into a spray of water in the process.

Summer really does call for the beach.

I took the saint to the beach as soon as the day reset. I didn't do it because I wanted to, but rather because the 'saint' of the past wanted me to. I had thought she would've swum a lot since the Haze Republic's castle was next to the sea, but... It seemed that she was unable to do that because of the onlookers. I guess that's the price you pay for becoming famous. She probably didn't have a lot of time for herself, since she always became surrounded by sick people.

To her, this was the first vacation she got on in five years. I took in the view of the horizon as I blew air into the tube in front of me. Well, I did until the saint jumped right in front in a white swimsuit.

“Tada~ How is it? Do you feel your heart throbbing yet?”

She posed as she said this. Maybe it was because she was quite underdeveloped, but she really didn't give off any sex appeal when she did this. How surprising. The only impression I got from her was that her hair was a bit different compared to before. I had thought that she only attracted attention in Korea because she was a foreigner, but she was quite popular here as well. We've had to shoo away men three times. Was she that pretty? I didn't really understand...

“Pretty good for a girl with a child’s body. I suppose you won’t be mistaken as a little girl anywhere.”

“Roar!”

I quickly restrained the saint with the tube when she ran at me. She told me she didn’t know how to swim, so I guess I’ll just teach her. With actual experience. I dragged her using the rope on the tube into the water.

Splash, splish.

Slightly warm—. The seawater that was transparent enough to see through tickled our toes. The saint began floating on her tube when the water reached out waist. That happy face of hers really is begging to be teased...

Well, I’ll restrain myself today. She did ask me to do this after all.

We played at the beach for an hour or so before making our way to the restaurant I made reservations in. L’Arpège, a three michelin star restaurant based in Paris. The saint asked me to take her to this place since she’s never had food in a place like this. I suppose there was no need to even look at the menu.

“Everything.”

I put a tip on top of the menu before the waiter managed to say anything. A gold coin that was worth hundreds of dollars. The

waiter, who seemed to have thought that I was joking, wiped the smile off his face. His slightly relaxed posture straightened up immediately as well. He took the menu, bowed, and quietly made his way to the kitchen. These aren't the type of people that need money at whatever the cost; they'd most likely discuss with one another about my order first. A little while later, the chef came to us to tell us that the amount of food we ordered was a little too much for two people. He gave in when I suggested that he could bring it out little by little at a time.

“Mr. Murderer? You're super nice today. And it's almost like you know about all my dreams... Hmm...”

How perceptive. The saint stopped shoving food in her mouth and set her utensils down on the table. Taking her gaze away from her food, she looked up at me. I guess it's only obvious she'd be curious, considering how everything that she ever wanted to do was being done. All this was planned by the saint herself. She gave me this list telling me to do all these for her if the day reset. I didn't have any reason to fulfill any of them, but I did owe something to her anyway...

After we finished eating, we moved on to the aquarium. The Churaumi Aquarium (沖縄美ら海水族館), based in Okinawa. The Kurushio Tank was recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records as the biggest tank in the world. Its overwhelming size allowed one to be able to see a giant cross section of the sea.

It was a view that would overwhelm anyone who saw it.

A whale shark leisurely swam in the aquarium. The light that

shined over it almost gave it a certain element of holiness to it. The saint quietly gazed up at the majestic sight before her.

Right, that's that. Next is...

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“Hah...”

Once we came back home at around 8PM, I put down the tired saint back onto the sofa. She flopped down out of exhaustion refusing to move.

“I told you it was too much.”

The schedule was far too big to be completed in one day. We managed to complete it thanks to our high HP and stamina though... We went to the Alps and even managed to see the Sphinx.

I guess she can die happy now?

Right, this is good enough for today. Time to go back to the library. The saint managed to stop me before I began to make my way up the stairs.

“Where are you going?”

“The fairy who grants wishes doesn’t work past this time.”

“No! There’s still an hour left!”

She knew that she would lose her memories and that the day would reset. I suppose that was why she didn’t want to waste even a single minute.

“Where do you want to go to then?”

The saint gave me a confident thumbs up. Perhaps I shouldn’t have asked in the first place... A little while later, I ended up at the entrance to the Stair Village with the saint who had changed into autumn clothes.

“The festival isn’t over yet! Let’s go!”

It wasn’t over, but it sure was getting close to it. The walk to the summit of the half mountain was filled with flowers and fruits. Pomegranates, mandarins, apples... All fruits that grow in the autumn. This was probably the remnant of the [Autumn Carriage]. During the traditional festival that is held in Stair Village, Ascension, five boys who haven’t gone through their coming of age ceremony would carry a carriage up the mountain. The other boys would either help push the carriage or put weights on it. The watching girls would also throw in fruits and grains onto the carriage.

Their target was the top of the mountain.

The boys would climb up the stairs with all their strength. Their path would get steeper the more they climbed; the carriage would get heavier along with it. By that time, the onlookers would join in to push. They would put the carriage to the peak of the mountain and offer all that is inside it as an offering to the sky island that would pass by.

“Hold on, you two.”

The two of us turned to look at the source of the voice.

“Don’t rush yourselves now. Why don’t you try getting your fortunes told?”

It came from a corner of the night market. There was an old woman there staring up at us with a crystal ball laid out in front of her on a blue table.

A fortune teller?

I tried to just ignore her. Contrary to my plans, the saint pulled at my arms despite me trying to leave.

“We can’t just ignore the famed fortune teller of Stair Village. Do you even know how famous she is?”

I feel like I’m doing a bunch of things that I’d normally never do

because of the saint. My, the losses really are big today. The old lady with the hooked nose laughed to herself as she asked for nearly 10,000 dollars. It's not like I couldn't give it to her, but...

"It's a total ripoff."

"Call it a donation."

I wonder if fortune telling would be considered a superstition in a world where god exists. Seeing how I can feel a bit of mana in the air, it doesn't feel like a scam either... The fortune teller stuffed the cash into her pocket and began to rub the crystal ball in a mystical manner.

"Right, who should I look into first? Should I use constellations or tarot cards? Choose what you want."

Constellations... Can't you just ask god for your fortunes?

"Cards! Tarot cards! Him first!"

When the saint said this, the fortune teller turned to stare at my face. Was she trying to do a cold reading?

"You've been on a long journey. You've lived a long, harsh life."

It could be interpreted in a lot of different ways. She probably noticed that I wasn't a villager and just said a thing about a

traveller.

“Right, ok. Let’s take a look at your fortunes. Don’t be too disappointed by what you get. The fates will shuffle the cards and we will be the ones who fight for them.”

Hmm... So this old woman was from a different world as well? She pulled out two cards from the deck and slowly flipped them on the table.

The Hanged Man and The Joker.

The meaning of these ominous cards were...

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“What do you think? She was totally right, right?”

“Not really.”

The saint was all excited after hearing that she’d live long without diseases and get a son and a daughter in the process. On the other hand, I was told that I would be betrayed by a friend and die one more time.

Was she really a fake...?

But, well, I did gain something in the process. I might've attained a weapon to defeat the Hero.

Problem is, I don't know how much it got repaired...

The saint took off her hairband and stomped forward. Every time she took a step, her hair waved left and right. It took us thirty minutes to walk this far and we didn't have much left till we got to the summit. The saint asked me questions as we walked.

"Second quiz! 53, 116, 92!"

"...I kill you."

"Boop boop! Wrong!"

She managed to think of something so annoying so fast... We had ten minutes left now. After that, she'd lose all her memories.

"Ah!"

The saint found something as she walked. She ran forward to check it out. When I walked up to follow her, I found a large dog that had just died. Its white fur had turned grey from all the dust, and its front legs had some sort of a decoration resembling a game pad. Was it someone's pet...? I looked down at the saint who was kneeling next to the dog and asked a question.

“What are you doing?”

“We should bury it. Don’t you feel sorry for it?”

Sorry for it... It’s just dead. We weren’t even related to it. I might’ve felt something if I knew it, but...

The saint lifted the dog’s body with difficulty and hugged it.

“Stop acting so weak.”

I took the body for her. Now, what’s a good place to bury it... I didn’t feel the need to go too far, so I just decided to bury it on the hill we were standing on that overlooked the entire village.

One minute left.

I should read a book if the day repeats again. That way, I’d be able to accumulate knowledge infinitely.

“Ah, right.”

I thought of the last thing the saint requested from me and took out a diamond ring from the vault. It was something that was originally in the Grand Thief’s Vault. I didn’t sell it this time. It should be around the price for the suit that she gave me at the beginning of the trip. The saint froze when she saw the ring.

Does she not like it?

This too was something that she asked for. Was it because I didn't put it on her ring finger? I stepped forward and grabbed her left hand. A blue flame caught my hand and lit up the area around us. The saint's face had taken on a maple red hue. Almost like the autumn leaves. Her shy appearance just made me want to tease her even more.

To think she'd be this embarrassed from this...

I checked the watch after putting the ring on her. 8:59:55PM. The day should repeat now.

5, 4, 3, 2, 1...

“...”

How strange. Why wasn't there... Was this the last one?

Piuuuw—

A light streamed up into the night sky and exploded. A red flower bloomed above us. A light that followed shortly after bloomed into a purple flower. At the edge of the village, atop the hill, I watched the saint play with the ring on her hand with a happy face as I fell into deep contemplation.

Chapter 55. Nervousness

The current time was 9:57AM with clear skies. The peak of the mountain was filled with people who had come to observe the sky island. I had gotten together with Necro after two days and was now looking at the reason why the mountain was referred to as a half mountain.

“How steep.”

It was too steep to be called a fjord. The term “cliff” suited it far better. The plot of land that was supposed to be at the peak had been cleanly cut in two. The surface of the cut was shiny and reflective, almost like glass. Did the dirt melt as it got cut?

“This was done by the Hero...”

The Hero made the mountain look like this with a single strike. With strength like this, there was no need for the Hero to have comrades. Only now did I understand what the saint meant by what she said.

‘Sword Monster really is just suited for defense. It’s just sturdy.’

She wasn’t exaggerating when she said this. Despite having killed tens of different ability users, the Warrior was, in the end, just a tank.

So the actual Hero’s this strong...

Well, I guess I'll think about that later. The one we have to face right now was the Summoner. Let's just focus on her for now. I walked away from the cliff to go to the table where the other two were. Necro, who had been enraged when I first showed him my new face, had pulled back his hair to show off that he, too, could be handsome.

“Well? Can you estimate how strong the Hero is now?”

“Let's get to that after the Summoner.”

I sat down as I was handed the report. The one we had to kill this time was a young girl who had just turned fifteen. A Russian girl named Iris.

So they brought a child along to kill the Demon King. How amazing. The power she had was something that allowed her to reflect any kind of damage, [Absolute Reflect].

[Absolute Reflect = Lonely One] – An ability to reflect damage.

- [Lv.1] Red: Flame (Heat, etc.)
- [Lv.2] Orange: Kinetic energy (Gravitational force, etc.)
- [Lv.3] Yellow: Mental attacks (Curses, hypnosis, etc.)

- [Lv.4] Green: Sound
- [Lv.5] Blue: Cold
- [Lv.6] Indigo: Electromagnetic Force (light, radiation, etc.)
- [Lv.7] Violet: Poison, germs
- [Lv.8] White: Damage

A childish ability. Her power must be derived from her personality of rejecting society. And that personality must be the reason why she was living alone on an island. According to the note that Necro gave me, she was a girl that the saint looked after like a young sister. Not that that would really matter...

I glanced at the saint, who had been staring at me emptily since a while back. She looked down when our eyes met. Her fingers were playing with the ring I have her on the table.

...Whatever. She probably forgot all about the Summoner. It should work out fine.

I put the report back on the table.

“I have three plans. I can try the first two myself, but if they

don't work..."

"If they don't work?"

Necro's eyes followed my gaze to look at the saint. She covered her face in embarrassment. If the first two plans don't work, we'll have to rely on her. This was something that only she could do. Only because most of the abilities that could be bought through Heart of Gold was something that required mana. I looked away from the saint and turned towards Necro.

"The first thing we have to do is to kill all the summoned beasts in the island. Can you do it?"

"Ha~ Look at you, just assuming things. Just what do you think I am? I can't. I can't do it. Do you even know how many beasts she has under her? Do you still have no idea on how useless I am?"

"Just try your best. I just don't want any distractions."

"Well, let's just say that I'm going to take care of all the summoned beasts. What next? Just tell us how to get past her power already."

The saint didn't speak at all. She was just glancing at me every once in awhile with dreamy entranced eyes. If I'm not wrong, what she was feeling right now was a feeling of love. I had killed her former lover, Romeo Smith, and was about to kill her dearest friend who was like a younger sister to her...

Would she be able to continue liking me after getting back her memories? Would she be able to forgive herself for that?

Just what does she see in me? My heartless self? The face that I can change as long as I had money?

I don't get it. It's not like it's something very important though. I'll just ignore it. Back to the topic.

“Before we get to talking about how we can get through her power, we need to talk about something. Absolute Reflect. If it indeed does reflect everything away from the Summoner, how does she hear and how does she breath?”

Necro answered my question easily.

“It's not an attack, so it doesn't get ignored.”

“Correct. It's not an attack, so it doesn't get ignored. In other words, ‘it is possible to choose what would be reflected and what won't.’ She allows certain gases, sounds, and gravity through. Seeing how even poison gas doesn't work on her, there is an algorithm of sorts that is able to sort poison away from air.”

What attack would work against a power that filters out attacks? The solution was simple. If I can't work on the outside, I'll just work on the inside. I'll lead her to kill herself. Necro knew that I was leading him to the actual method of killing the girl from his

two previous experiences, so he listened carefully.

“Right, so?”

“Differentiating and calculating. In other words, there needs to be a ‘process’ that needs to be completed before reflecting attacks. It can’t be a simple process. Take this. If A and B both had the same absolute reflection ability, and A punched B, what would happen?”

“Who knows? Would it be reflected like a ping pong?”

“What if A pulls back his punch? Who gets damaged, then?”

He didn’t respond back immediately. Humans were creatures that learned. Instead of just saying ‘ah, I don’t get it!’, he would try to figure out how everything would work. After a while of thinking, he finally opened his mouth.

“Processing time. There’s a tiny delay...?”

“Correct again. A calculates the reflect, and B calculates as well. There has to be a certain field around the user that calculates the reflection. Since there’s a limit to how fast it can calculate, mixing up attacks and attacking faster would lower its power.”

A recursive function. The function would call upon itself again and again like an ouroboros biting its tail, eating up the CPU faster and faster. This would cause the computer to overheat and shut down.

“The area of the power is something to think about as well. For example, if the area affected by the power was a sphere with a radius of ten meters, and emptied the air just around that sphere, what would she do?”

“She’d try to get out of that area.”

“What if it wasn’t possible?”

Delay, area of effect, and the limits of the processing power. These were the three weaknesses that we had to consider. The first two were the weaknesses that I’d try to exploit. If they didn’t work, the saint would have to come into play.

It would be best if I could finish it myself...

I heard a loud ‘boom’ as I talked, causing me to raise my head. The island, despite being so far from us, still took up most of our view. It was a monstrous object with a volume of a 100 cubic kilometers.

This too, was a relic of the very first Hero, just like the land spider. What kept the island afloat was probably magic.

After a bit, the island began to move across the half mountain. Through the floating eye, I was able to estimate that the amount of summoned creatures in the island to be around nine hundred. There was only a single human among all these creatures. A cute

girl that resembled a doll more than anything was having a joyous time on her unicorn.

Did she not know? Well, I guess she had no way of knowing that her comrades had died when she was stuck on an island.

Now, then—.

Sorry, young lady. You'll have to be alone for a bit.

I took out the thousand thunderbirds, and signalled Necro. His hands stretched out towards the sky.

Our target was the entire island.

The birds dropped down and black smoke began to rise up from the entire island. I, who had fixed my floating eye on the Summoner, was able to hear her desperate screams.

So this wasn't enough to kill her.

I turned to the saint, who had turned a little sick, and motioned her to follow me as I jumped down. Necro jumped with me as he cast several spells. Red and blue spears composed of fire rained down on the island. Spikes made of stone sprouted out at the same time, making the island turn into a hellscape.

Chapter 56. Encouraging Suicide

The burning beasts were running around screaming strangely. A summoned beast that resembled a deer jumped around with a stone spike in its stomach. Soon afterwards it dropped dead, spilling its intestines all over the floor in the process.

Was this too much for the saint?

She looked quite depressed, but she wasn't looking away.

Ah, so she's fine.

I suppose it was obvious, given how she's been through worse things before. The one who had suffered from this 'mental attack' was the Summoner. She must feel extremely painful, given how her friends were being completely massacred. She may be a hero who's been through quite a lot of things, but there was no way she'd be fine after seeing all of her friends killed like this.

With this, her summoning magic was pretty much sealed away.

If she tries to summon anything again, I'll throw one of the corpses here at her.

I'll ask her if she'd make 'imaginary friends' again as I do this.

"Do you need a potion?"

Necro, who had been casting magic relentlessly, shook his head. When I checked his status with the Oracle, I found that his mana was still completely full. So he still wasn't going all out.

As expected of the world's strongest...

With a spell that was less than fifty words, he had managed to completely destroy the sky island. It was a wonder the island managed to stay afloat. The plants on the island had all burnt to a crisp and the ground was paved in many places, making it look quite abnormal. I was quite impressed, but instead I just decided to taunt Necro a little to make him outperform himself.

“That's all you got? How underwhelming.”

“Hot damn. This much is amazeballs already. Just what did you expect?”

“Nukes?”

“Are you kidding me? What kind of a wizard do you think I am?”

He responded with a tone laced with annoyance. Well anyhow. There were a few creatures left, but they weren't in any condition to do anything.

The only one left was a small girl who had gotten down on her

knees.

I told them to keep their distance as I made my way to the Summoner. The girl who had put on a cute eye mask along with a pair of pink pajamas didn't move one bit when I moved near her. The silver string on her wrist snaked up her arm to her shoulders though, like a living being.

[Silver Snake]

– Rank: C-

– A stringlike armor. It protects the body and stops any bleeding.

Did she unsummon her unicorn? I tried firing a bullet at her head as a test.

Bang! Ping!

I was trying to observe how the damage would be reflected. Before anything though, I felt a shock to my helmet and my head bent backwards.

So she could control direction.

If one considered the angle in which the bullet was fired, it was obvious that the bullet would have hit the floor. It could've even gone right back into the gun even. But not my helmet.

“Go... Go away...”

She seemed to have squeezed the words out of her. The Summoner, head still hidden between her knees, raised her arm. There was a midnight blue bracelet on it.

[Against Heaven's Will] – Rank: A-

- A weather controlling weapon created by the rain dragon. It is possible to lock on a target using special gestures.

- The casting time changes depending on the weather conditions. After an average wait time of thirty minutes, a lightning bolt strikes the target 3~12 times.

- The casting time changes depending on the weather conditions. After an average wait time of fifteen minutes, a hurricane can be seen over the horizon.

- ...

This must be from the same world as [History of Evil = Murderer]. The bracelet opened up to let out a midnight blue light. The Summoner easily manipulated the hologram cast in front of her.

She was probably planning on using the strongest skill listed on the weapon, the Spear of Lightning. There were thirty minutes left till the spell would actually be cast, so I had quite a bit of time left. I watched as the sky above me became darker and asked the saint to scatter the clouds above us. If there are no clouds, there would no no lightning.

Her methods of attack was completely sealed off, and now it was my turn to attack.

Out of the three plans, the first one I'd try to use would be the 'delay'. As long as the Summoner's power didn't influence time, there had to be a delay in the processing time for the reflection. If that processing time took too long, the ability would become ineffective in battle. Due to this, I hypothesized that instead of putting a reflective field on different parts of the body, the Summoner would have surrounded her body with a thin reflective barrier of the same element.

Reflection was simply the act of changing a + to a -, and a - to a +. If I attack with a force of + and - all at once, one of these two attacks would work.

I put my index finger and middle finger on the Summoner's

forehead and the moment I came into contact with her, I pushed in with my middle finger and pulled back with my index finger. The two forces were now opposite to each other. The result of this attack was... quite horrid, to say the least.

“...So it’s not this easy, is it.”

I pulled back my burnt finger. The timing was right, but the Summoner’s power seemed to work a lot more elaborately than I thought.

Alright. Onto the next plan. I asked the saint and Necro to put a smaller version of the barrier they created when we fought the Warrior. What I was planning on doing now was to exploit the area of effect of the Summoner’s ability. I took out a can of air from the vault and looked down at the Summoner. To think she didn’t even try to run despite having three people try to kill her like this...

This should probably be a result of her fear of society, rather than confidence in her power.

A shut in. That’s what she was.

I filled the insides of the barrier with pure oxygen and lit it on fire. In an instant, a huge flash fire roared— burning away all the air within the barrier.

There was no way to create something out of nothing. It didn’t matter what she did with her power. If there was no air, she

couldn't survive. But as I thought this, I noticed that the Summoner was chewing on something relaxedly.

“What's that?”

“An air bean... Eating it allows you to breath underwater for more than twelve hours, is what Iris says to the villain.”

There must've been an underwater stage of sorts when they were fighting the Demon King... I never heard of an item like this. Wasn't written on the report, either. Seeing how she was eyeing the Hirganrel intensely, it seemed that she had realized that the Warrior had died. This allowed me to come up with a new plan. I showed the Summoner the mark of the Grand Thief's Vault on the back of my hand.

“See this? Romeo Smith and Chrono Historia are both dead. If you die here, I could let the Hero live.”

“Trash, useless, villain. Big sister isn't going to be killed by a weak mob like you, is what Iris is angrily saying.”

Hm. Lies aren't working.

But I am figuring out why the girl is speaking like this. She seemed to be treating herself as a summoned beast. That must be why she was referring to herself in third person as if she was speaking for a different person.

An extreme case of hiding one's true self inside and putting a stand-in in one's place.

“Were you made fun of? Bullied, perhaps?”

The Summoner twitched.

“A girl who rejected everything and ended up reflecting everything away from her. Only beasts are her friends... How perverse. You don't seem to have realized it, but putting your friends in the front lines to fight for you... Are you really their friend? If you're going to fight, do it yourself. Don't put other people's lives at risk for your sake. At this rate, your so-called friends are just fighting dogs.”

I threw a knife at her feet.

“Why don't you repent?”

If the Summoner doesn't kill herself here, the saint would have to kill the girl herself. I felt a strange sense of nervousness as I looked at this fifteen year old girl.

Chapter 57. Death By Fire

She refused. The Summoner that had retreated into herself showed no signs of change.

So petty tricks don't work on her...

I wanted to keep the saint as far away from this as possible. It wasn't that I didn't trust her ability, it was just that there were just too many thing that made me worried. After thinking for a bit, I gave the Summoner an offer that I normally wouldn't have given.

“Listen well. This is your last chance. If you surrender now, I'll send you back to your former world. That's a lot better than dying, isn't it?”

Still nothing. Considering how her former world wasn't exactly a place that was appealing to her, I suppose this response made sense. In fact, the one who responded to this was Necro.

[Hold up! Hold up, hold up, hold up. For real? I knew your ability had levelled up, but... Something like that's possible? No joke? For real?]

“We can talk about that later.”

[Ah, right right right! But... Ah, it's nothing. Let's just see if this offer actually works on her. If she agrees to it, just be sure to tell me before you let her go, alright?]

Why? I understood that Necro might want to go back to his original world, but I felt that he had a different motive underneath.

Does he not want to let the Summoner go? Was there a reason why she had to die?

I just have to take her equipment, but...

I glanced at the saint and saw that she was in a trance casting an elementary magic of light and water. She revealed to me before that she didn't know any form of attack magic. But depending on how one uses defensive magic, they could be utilized to kill people as well. I suppose I'll try talking while the saint prepares her magic. I sat myself down in front of the Summoner.

“The unbreakable Iris. Your specialty is summoning. You usually acted as a counter, shield, or even a scout in the hero party. Your country of origin is Russia. Since you've been summoned as a child, I suppose you never went through any proper education. I'll explain everything in simple terms for you then. If you don't get out of that tiny world of yours even after listening to what I have to say, then you'll die.”

The Summoner still didn't respond one bit. It almost seemed like she had fallen asleep.

“Let's go over your personality and power first. Your personality is social fear. Your power is Absolute Reflect. When I first looked

at this, I thought ‘A person who rejected absolutely everything was ballsy enough to go on a quest to kill the Demon King?’ There must’ve been someone who helped you along the way.”

The person who most likely helped her was the saint. The Summoner must’ve stepped out into the world with the saint’s help. She must’ve gotten involved in something as scary as the journey to kill the Demon King through this. The saint probably didn’t want to get the Summoner involved. She was probably too worried about leaving the Summoner and let the girl tag along. According to the note that Necro wrote on the report, the Summoner relied almost entirely on the saint, and after their journey, split apart.

And in the end, the Summoner chose her beasts over the saint. She decided to be together not with humans who had the chance of betraying her, but beasts who she could stay relaxed with.

Her idiocy almost rivalled that of the saint’s.

The first magic was cast and a school of fish composed of water appeared. The school of fish reflected light through its body, creating quite a beautiful sight. This seemingly harmless magic would soon work in order to destroy the Summoner.

The school of fish split up and gathered to form a sphere around the Summoner. The sunlight that shined through the sphere soon disappeared. The interior of the sphere was filled with transparent water, and the exterior became covered in mud.

A spherical mirror was formed with this.

“Let’s talk about your ability, Absolute Reflect. If you reflect absolutely everything, you wouldn’t be able to breath or walk. Due to this, the filtering process in your ability is an absolute necessity. Would it be possible to reflect ‘all kinds of attacks’ with a simple calculation? It’s easy to see that your power demands an immense amount of calculations.”

If the logic involved with the reflection ability was so simple, there would already be a type of magic similar to it.

“The routine of judging the type of attack and dealing with it was essential to this power. Like a filter, it needs to differentiate between simple air and poison gas. It also needs to figure out how the attack would be reflected. All of this has to be executed in an instant.”

The speed of the execution is critical to the power. Just like how she was able to reflect the bullet instantly, the actual ability always has to be executed instantly.

“Let’s say that you got the reflection process to be as efficient as possible. Even then, there’s a limit. Humans aren’t supercomputers that can calculate things infinitely fast. And there’s a limit to how much energy one can have as well. Even if you have the ability to ‘reflect’ anything’, would a person born in the universe be able to reflect anything the universe throws at him? Would it be possible to win against the universe? No, something like that’s only possible in children’s dreams.”

Information couldn't be transmitted faster than the speed of light, meaning that no supercomputer could compute things faster than light. The only thing that would allow something like this was to have a computer of the future send information to the computer of the past.

A futurist known as Ray Kurzweil defined this as such.

[The potential amount of computation rises with the available energy.]

From this, we can assume that if two people with reflection powers fought, the one that would lose would be the one to run out of energy first.

“The ability to reflect things isn't something that belongs to you alone. Surrender.”

This was my last warning. The mirror that surrounded the Summoner became fully formed. I activated dematerialization and sent the saint a message. The only thing she was to do now was to cast a light ball within the sphere of water continuously. Normally, this magic would simply light up the insides of caves and such. By casting it like this, the light particles that would all be on the same wavelength to each other would overlap again and again, increasing in its heat and destructiveness.

Soon enough, the inside of the sphere had become blisteringly bright. The light that got reflected by the Summoner would be reflected by the mirror, then by the Summoner. The process would continue again and again at the speed of light.

An optical resonator. The major component of lasers.

Because water could always be resupplied, there were no worries of having the mirror break. Even if the heat from the laser gets far too high, since the boiling point of the water had been modified, the water would not become gaseous.

If we continue to pour more and more light into the sphere, the Summoner's power would certainly hit a computing limit.

Causing the Absolute Reflect power to overheat through the use of infinite reflection. This was the core of this plan.

The inside of the sphere was filled to the brim with photons. The dirt particles within the fish had been pushed to the outer edges of the sphere due to the heat. I went inside the vault in my dematerialized state, spent my cooldown time there, and went back outside dematerialized.

I checked up on the status of the Summoner by doing this. I couldn't afford to have her equipment just completely melt away by not paying attention. The Summoner's clothes started to catch on fire as her power began to overload. The Summoner quickly killed the fire in surprise, but her hair and shoulders caught fire as well. She would soon melt like a candle at this rate.

“No...! Iris doesn’t want to die like this...!!”

She struggled with all her strength.

The little girl scratched at the immobile sphere as she screamed. Well, I suppose this much was a relief because the saint was unable to see inside the sphere.

Seeing how the Summoner was crying and begging to be saved, her power seemed to have almost run out. Her entire body would soon catch fire and she would die. This much was fine. This was all according to plan.

At least, it was fine until the Summoner began to scream out the saint’s name in her dying breath.

“Big sister...! Morto...!!”

The girl uttered the name of the one person she should have never called out to. And the casting of the spell stopped, as if to respond to the Summoner’s pleas.

Abruptly, almost as if I could hear a clack, the gears in the saint’s head came to a halt.

Chapter 58. At The End Of The Iris

The sphere crumbled away. The mirror disintegrated and light exploded outwards in the process. The nearby minerals melted away like flowing water as the area was struck with a shockwave of heat.

So this is what ends up happening.

Necro was the first to go. He melted away after being struck with a beam of light. Obviously his simple defense magic was unable to take the output of light. I wasn't worried about him. There had to be a corpse within a hundred kilometer radius. He'd revive in due time.

The problem was the saint.

When she was outside the sphere, she 'didn't know'. Since I told her that I'd be the one doing the killing and that she would simply distract the Summoner with spinning lights.

The lie I told her made her hurt the one person she treated like her little sister. The saint hadn't even fallen down from the shock wave, due to her own shock.

To be more accurate, she rolled across the floor several times after being hit and stood up. Her skin was boiling back to its previous state, but her burnt clothes stayed as is. The Summoner crawled up to the broken form of the saint.

“Big sister... Big sis...!”

I could see a girl with severe burns on her body stumble forward across the haze of heat. She didn't seem to have any power left to reflect, seeing that she was flinching at even the smallest flicker of flame.

The hazy eyes–

The hazy eyes of the saint began to turn a little bit clearer. It wasn't that her burnt retina wasn't healing itself. It was almost as if she was regaining her consciousness.

“Iris...?”

The saint had woken from her long, long dream, and was now making her way to the Summoner. Her slow steps began to speed up as she got closer.

Is this what they call a happy reunion?

The Saint's personality was called Ahimsa. I had thought once she denied her personality of avoiding violence and death enough, she would suffer from a few side effects, but...

To think she would have recovered her memories...

I wonder ‘what time’ this saint is from? When she started to save other people? When she was tortured after being captured by her allies? Or did she remember that we went around killing her friends, lovers, and even family members?

I stretched out my hand from behind.

The Summoner saw that her beloved older sister’s face was now meters away, smiled with happiness. But before they actually got together, I grabbed onto her hair and pulled back. I lifted her up into the air by sticking my fingers deep into her scalp.

Her doll-like body lifted easily.

Scream.

The saint came to a halt after hearing this fear-filled scream. The Summoner struggled to get out of my grasp.

“You’re making this difficult.”

All of this would have been for naught if the saint heals the Summoner. It would’ve been so much easier if the Summoner just killed herself when she was told to do it.

“Stop it...”

The saint’s eyes were filled with desperation. She must know

better than anyone about what I was about to do. I closed my hand around the Summoner's frail white neck. Her body jerked up when her skin came in contact with my cold hand.

The girl let out a strong cough as my hand tightened around her tender neck like a vice.

“Keh... Kuh...! Ke... Kah...!”

I couldn't snap it swiftly. If the Summoner managed to muster the last of her strength and reflected, I would be the one with the broken neck.

Slowly, slowly.

I turned the Summoner's head as the saint watched. From the front, to the left. The girl clawed at my hand powerlessly.

She must be in agony.

I could feel just how much pain she was feeling right now. Seeing as I had no care whatsoever about her pain– I must be a monster like the people said.

“Please...! Please stop!”

I strengthened my grip as I heard the saint's tearful shouts.

Crack, snap.

Her neck vertebrae turned slowly, and broke slowly.

The Summoner, already unconscious from the pain, let out excrements as her neck completely snapped. This wasn't enough to confirm that she was dead, though, so...

After confirming her death through the Oracle, I put the corpse down on the floor. I couldn't afford to put something this dirty inside the vault.

“Ah...”

The saint crumbled in front of the corpse. She dropped down like a puppet that had its strings cut off and started shaking the corpse with hazy eyes.

“Iris...? Iris...?”

“She's dead.”

“...She's not moving.”

Obviously, that's because she's de...

I pushed the saint back before I could answer her. She dumbly

looked up at me after she tried to use salvation on the Summoner's corpse.

“Mr. Murderer...?”

Was she back? Or did she lose her memories again? If... If she used salvation on the corpse, what would happen? Would the corpse's wounds heal? Or...

“Eh? What did I, what... Ah... Iris...?”

The saint was confused. I put the Summoner's corpse in the vault, realizing that I couldn't leave her like this. It would smell for a bit, but I could clean it later. What I needed to do was to deal with this first. I extended my hand to help the saint get up. But...

Slap.

The saint slapped my hand away and glared at me with eyes that she's never shown me before. Her eyes were filled with a fiery hate akin to that of a beautiful flaming rose.

“Why...”

“You can buy a life can't you? Buy Iris a life using mine as the payment.”

The saint spat out these words coldly, even before I managed to

finish my sentence. Her eyes that looked up at me were filled with loathing.

Ah... Was that it? So she was back to normal...

This was the 'real' saint. Her love and her playful way of talking until now were all fake. The act of approaching me carelessly. The act of acting abnormally.

All of it—.

It was obvious. The person she was with was a murderer who could have killed her at any time. I might look good now, but back then, I was a smelly rotting corpse. It would've been normal for her to avoid me out of fear and disgust. The only reason why she didn't was...

Because she was insane from the start or because she was much kinder than others.

Perhaps all of this was a delusion of mine. As I thought, I was unable to make sound judgements as a failed product. I wonder if I'd be able to make correct calculations though? She asked me to buy Iris a life using hers...

“No. You already paid for something using that.”

The saint only remembered what happened on the last day, but I remembered every single one of the repeated days.

Including what she had asked me to do on the fourth day.

I let her wishes come true with the payment she gave me. The proof of that was the ring on her finger. The saint's eyes followed my gaze to her hand. She made a confused face for a second, then threw the rings on her hand to the floor.

“Is this what you need? Take it! Take it all!”

“...Even if you do that, that's far from enough.”

And I didn't even know if I could buy a life for other people. I picked up the rings on the floor.

The snake of infinity, Ouroboros.

The Devourer ring.

And the ring that I had gifted her...

“Please... I beg you... Please, I'll give you anything you want...”

Her sharp, spiteful gaze was nowhere to be seen. The saint drooped down like a criminal as she handed me her frog wallet.

Her trembling hand was covered in dirt–.

“Still not enough.”

Does she still love me? Or did that emotion turn into hate? I stretched out my hand towards her shoulder. Only because I was curious.

“Don’t touch me!”

An angry shout.

My hand lost its original target and ended up grasping the air.

...I see.

I get it...

So that heart of hers...

The journey would end once the Hero dies. After that point, there shouldn’t be any more instances where I would meet the saint again. Perhaps this was a good thing. It would have been troublesome if she tried to follow me. For some reason, a question she had asked me right before we left the Stair Village ran through my head.

“What do you think is at the end of the rainbow?”

The cheerful saint who threw me questions relentlessly was no more.

“A pot filled with gold?”

“Wrong! There’s happiness and love!”

That was all. Since we had a different perspective on things, it was impossible for us to look at one thing the same way.

Perhaps I should have expected an ending like this from the first time I met the saint. The saint looked up at me in her sitting position. Her eyes were no longer filled with loathing or desperation, only sadness.

“Why... You didn’t have to kill her... So why...”

There might have been no need to kill the Summoner, as she had said. If the girl just surrendered, if the girl hadn’t called out to the saint–.

Plip, plop.

The rain formed a flower of water as it fell onto the dry floor. The slight drizzle soon turned to a roaring rain. It seemed to be the effect of the Summoner’s item. The rain put out the fire around the island, diluting the blood covering it as well.

I took out a house from the vault and put an umbrella over the saint. She looked up at me with a face that seemed to want to laugh and cry at the same time.

“Do you really, have... have no heart?”

“Who knows.”

I thought for quite some time, but it was almost impossible to understand something that I did not have. It was like blind person trying to grasp the concept of a rainbow.

“So back then, you really were...”

The saint stopped talking. She suddenly started to have a coughing fit— blood spilling out of her mouth. Her face had turned pale and the blood rolled down her arm to mix with the rain and flowed who knows where.

Was this because of the magic she had used? Or because she took off her rings?

The saint fell sideways as I stood there in shock and confusion.

Chapter 59. A Blazing Heart And A Frigid Head

When a person suffers from immense stress and possesses a power to regenerate at an inhuman speed, a certain irregularity forms. A cell gets created when one rejects death and continues to live for an extended time.

Cancer.

The cells that had forgotten its original purpose had eaten away at the saint's body for five years. The Ouroboros bracelet must've been there to stop the cancer cells from acting out. I sent the hired team of doctors to their original world using Heart of Gold as I looked down at the saint. She was pale, her breath seemed irregular and weak.

Her death was soon, and it was certain-.

It was too late to try to cure it. An attempt to extend her life would only manage to bring her more pain. The cancer cells on her body was the result of her using salvation one too many times.

This power that required the user to take on the pain and suffering of others while allowing them to have high health and regeneration had been taking its toll on her from since a long time ago.

She must've saved many, many people.

She probably never stopped to look at her body once. She probably just followed her heart to help those in need constantly. Just so that she could help one more person. Just so that she could make the world a little bit better.

But—.

This was how she ended. The one who is the most important in this world should be her, so why didn't she live a more self-fulfilling life?

...I couldn't understand it.

“Why do you have to help other people?”

When I asked the question a long time ago, the saint responded as if she had never thought about the question before.

“What? Mm... I wonder? Because you have to help other people?”

You had to help other people because you had to help other people. An answer befitting the saint perfectly.

“That's my question, idiot saint.”

“Do you need a reason to help other people?”

What a naive question—.

“I suppose I can call this a side effect of cramming. ‘Humans need to be good. For they are human.’ An illogical answer.”

“Pft! Mr. Murderer, you always say that ‘humans shouldn’t be looked down upon’, but you actually look down on them quite a bit, don’t you? Humans aren’t as thoughtless as you think you know?”

“Then what? Do humans do good because it profits everyone in the end?”

The saint gave me a thumbs up.

“Geez, you really are brainless. Helping someone you don’t even know for no apparent reason... It’s a loss, no matter how I see it. Not to mention that it’s illogical as well.”

“It’s not good to think about profits when it comes to saving other people. Don’t you think it would be good to help other people in your spare time? They might even repay you in the future.”

“Aha. So it’s like taking care of any future debts? Almost like an investment?”

The saint gripped onto her head in frustration.

“Ugh... No. No! That’s not it! It’s not supposed to be because of something that could be calculated, but rather...”

The saint clapped her hands after a bit of thought.

“Right!”

She even smiled confidently when it came through her head.

“The reason why people help each other is...! Because they have the capacity to relate with others. They feel other people’s pain. Because of this, they help others to help people out of their pain. In order to create a better world for everyone, like you said!”

A better world...

This dream of hers was quite similar to what the young me had strived to create.

A world where everyone benefits.

A world where everyone is happy.

But...

Why is it that I can't imagine you in this ideal world? The one who worked the hardest for it was you. The one who deserve to be the happiest is you.

Why do people have to be good?

I still didn't know the answer to this question. The answer that I had reached myself a long time ago turned out to be a wrong one.

[—]

“...Is that so? Alright.”

I turned off telepathy. Necro had managed to revive on the ground. He messaged me that he would get on the Sky Island at the next point. This would take him at least two days. I had to take care of the saint until then.

She seemed to be cured on the outside...

Was it because of the shock? I wonder how long it would take her to recover from her mental shock? The doctor told me that she needed to rest. The only thing I could do, therefore, was just watch over her.

It felt like a waste of time, but I couldn't afford to leave. I had no idea what the saint would do after waking up.

It would've been so much better if she just ran away...

The Warrior.

The Thief.

The Summoner.

And even the saint.

If they all just ran away...

“The Hero won't run you know?”

That bright voice of hers simply refused to leave my brain. Despite the fact that the saint herself was laying down in front of me like a corpse.

“The Hero's the one who fights for everyone's sake after all. You might not be the real thing, but you are a hero too Mr. Murderer! Why don't you try getting a change of heart and live like a kind person from now on? Doesn't this feel like a second chance for you?”

The past we shared crawled out of its grave to repaint the present. At the time, I had answered this question of hers with this.

“A hero... It’s highly abnormal to have a society rely entirely on one person.”

“Why do you think so coldly, Mr. Murderer? You really should try being more positive sometimes.”

“...Seeing the majority rely solely on a talented minority of people reminds me of a democratic society.”

The saint, who was sitting down next to a fountain at the time, had a confused expression on her face.

“Is that a positive line of thought?”

“No way. This is a violence of the majority. Something that’s only possible because the world is filled with idiots and evil. Heroes must exist because the majority didn’t want to take up arms to do the hard work themselves.”

The saint raised her head and looked down on me with an arrogant smile.

“Ants and sand count as the majority as well, you know?”

“‘Normally’ this is the case.”

“Even if that was the case, your theory of the majority of the population being idiots and evil is wrong!”

She strongly rejected my opinion. Seeing this, I couldn't help but ask a question.

“What about it is wrong?”

“Just look. I'm not trying to look down on you or anything, but if you look at the population as a whole statistically, there are very few idiots. There are very few you can call geniuses as well. Just like how there are very few truly good people, there are very few truly bad people as well. The majority would actually be normal citizens. The people who aren't that stupid or smart. A normal person, just like me.”

“How interesting.”

To think she'd call herself a normal citizen... If one put the world on a spectrum, the saint was surely the most beautiful shade of white.

“They say that both good and evil exist in a person's heart. They can be kind sometimes but at the same time, they can be evil as well. They can make stupid moves and wise choices at times. Humans are a complicated mess of things. Perhaps the only reason why the world seems to be full of idiots and evil is because they're far too bright? You only notice them a lot more because they stand out.”

Right. She had to be right. In this world, both idiots and evil were a small minority. Most were normal people, neither good nor

evil, smart nor stupid, worrying about their daily lives.

Perhaps the real idiot here was me.

The sky darkened as the night closed in. The sun rose into the sky and fell back down again. I continued to sit in my chair, waiting for the saint to open her eyes.

Four days later.

The saint managed to open her eyes. She told me this once she found me.

“You’re arrogant, deceiving, and you never even try to understand others. I dislike you for that.”

I completely agree. There was probably no one in this entire world who could give a heart to a heartless monster like me.

No, this probably was the case for any world that might be out there...

The saint who had regained her memory was far quieter than before. Her eyes were void of light, and she refused to eat any food.

And soon,

The time to end this journey of ours had come.

—

A blazing heart and a frigid head.

Heißes Herz und kühler Kopf.

Epilogue end.

Once autumn ends and winter passes, spring arrives.

Beginning the [Reality Modification] arc.

Chapter 60. A Godlike Munchkin

Camille. French. 18 years old. I could see a blonde girl with hair flowing down to her waist in the picture I've received. Her skin was tanned and she had a bright, perfect smile on her face.

This was the Hero.

“Her father is a three-time champion in the world kendo championships, and her mother is the youngest gold medalist in fencing... The girl was practically a sword fighter since birth.”

Any other time she would have tackled my words faster than anyone else, but now she just glanced at me hatefully. She looked away uninterestedly as she went back to cooking the meal for her and Necro.

Did the return of her memories change her personality? How interesting. I suppose I'll observe her more later.

I turned the page.

[Showed her talent with the sword from birth. Was educated in the sword since an extremely young age; the girl herself works on the basics every day diligently. Even after having killed the Demon King, she practices by swinging and stabbing with her sword six million times an hour every day. #Picture Included]

Did I read that wrong?

Six million an hour?

I'm more interested in the person who managed to count all that... The included picture only showed an explosion of plasma and wind. I couldn't even see the Hero.

So this was practice...

1,666 sword strokes a second. If I assume that the Hero was performing a downward stroke, and assume that the length of her longsword to be 1.4 meters, with the stroke ending at 45 degrees, the radius of the arc of the stroke is around 1.6 meters. A simple calculation would show that the speed of the stroke is around mach 7.8.

“Hah...”

I've fought against immortality, time control, and even absolute reflection. But seeing this just made me sigh.

It wasn't like there weren't any animals in the natural world that could move this fast. Certain insects were able to flutter their wings a thousand times per second. But this was only possible because their wings were thin and were structured differently. If a human tried to do something like that, their veins would explode and their muscles would melt.

This probably just goes to show that the Hero was far past the limitations of the human body.

“So is that how it is?”

A strength one attains after surpassing death. If the Warrior managed to attain something like this, it’s likely that the Hero had received something far greater.

Her current level was fifteen.

Romeo Smith was level ten, meaning that she was probably around thirty times stronger than him... And if we take into account her equipment—.

I began to examine her list of equipment immediately.

[Genius Weapon = Wise Arms] – Rank: S+

– A highly-intelligent weapon that evolves according to the civilization it resides in. It takes different forms according to the age it belongs in. There seems to be a certain limit set on the weapon, and it seems to evolve when the user becomes unable to beat the opponent.

– <Sealed> Unknown...

The weapon in the picture was a pure white sword. The sword's hilt seemed to have been created from a 3D printer. A seemingly elastic cable connected the sword's body to its hilt. It was probably a weapon from a world similar to the one Murderer came from. According to stories, the Hero had managed to slice the moon using this sword. The fact that the story exists in the first place probably meant that someone was there to witness it.

“Rank S+.”

Did the Hero slice the moon using her ability or was it a feature that the sword had?

The distance from the earth to the moon was around 357,000 km. If I say that the time it took to observe the effects of the strike was around thirty minutes after the actual strike, we could say that the speed the sword stroke travels at is 208 km/s. Seventeen times faster than the third cosmic velocity.

It was only a 0.1% of the speed of light, but...

“I can't dodge this.”

It wouldn't matter even if I hid in the vault or dematerialized. I would be destroyed before I even noticed that she had attacked. Necro heard me saying this and approached me while eyeing the saint carefully.

“Can’t you buy an ability to deal with it? You could try raising your stats with money.”

“Not possible. The speed at which the nerves would transmit information would be around 0.1km/s. It’s two thousand times slower than the attack that cut into the moon. My body would turn to ash before the information even reaches my head. Dodging it would probably be impossible even with the Thief’s clairvoyant eyes. The Hero would just have to modify the stroke a little bit. Even if I manage to see the 0.01 seconds into the future and make my move, it would be too late.”

I’ll have to assume that I was hit the moment she uses it. It was just that fast. Necro thought for a bit, then shouted “Aha!”.

“What if we use illusions?”

“She’d see through it.”

This wasn’t that simple. The Hero wasn’t just strong, but also wise. Necro went back to thinking again. He was striking up a conversation with me in place of the saint. He didn’t really help.

Well, onto the defensive equipment.

[Strategic Membrane Armor = Hilbert Architecture] – Rank:
A+

– Hilbert Architecture is the technology of expanding the volume of a small space, filling it with a durable heat-resistant material, then folding it all back into its original form. The actual item seems thin and transparent but boasts a defensive power tens of times more powerful than the average tank.

I couldn't really tell how strong it was just based on its rank or description... I only managed to see how ridiculous the item was when I turned the page and saw defense +1,500 and magic resistance +800. Its mass was 0 and its volume was 0. It didn't seem like the Hero was wearing anything, but to think she wouldn't even get a scratch from getting hit by a missile–.

“Hmm...”

They say any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic, but isn't this a little too much? I guess my weapon would help me get around that problem. There was one equipment left.

[The Horn of The Plentiful = Cornucopia] – Rank: C

– A horn-shaped earring that fills up the user.

It was an accessory decorated with numerous flowers composed of gems. The Hero doesn't need to eat or drink with this item. Due to this, it becomes impossible to attempt to poison the Hero.

This was effectively the entire set of items that the Hero had, disregarding the Dragon Boots. One sword, one piece of armor, and one earring. It seemed rather frugal, but each item was extremely powerful.

The real problem begins here though. The next page contained the information on the Hero's power.

[Reality Modification = Endless Ideal] – Modifies reality within a certain range.

- [Lv.1] Body Modification
- [Lv.2] Phenomenon Modification
- [Lv.3] Material Modification
- [Lv.4] Phenomenon Creation
- [Lv.5] Material Creation
- [Lv.6] Limited Dimension Modification
- [Lv.7] Limited Time Modification

– [Lv.8] Physics Modification

– [Lv.9] Idea Modification

Unlike the other heroes, the price for using Endless Ideal was already known. Like me, the Hero couldn't use mana. Every time she uses her power, her soul becomes weaker. In other words, she would disappear once she uses enough of her power. It was a price befitting the power.

Perhaps I can call it the opposite of Absolute Reflect. If Absolute Reflect was defensive, Endless Ideal was offensive.

Apparently it was possible to use Body Modification in order to permanently modify the body. It was possible to raise the body's regeneration speed and even improve eyesight to be like a microscope.

With Material Modification, she could harden water into a sword that she could use, or liquefy any door that might be in her path... Seeing how she had managed to restore a destroyed building in the past, you might as well call the ability a miracle.

“...She's pretty much god like this.”

She could use Phenomenon Creation to create fire in the air and make lightning fall in a clear sky. She could even use Material Creation to create weapons and food. Her level six ability, Limited

Dimension Modification, would allow her to teleport. The level seven ability might as well be the Thief's time stop. The bigger problem was level eight and nine.

The latter parts of the report detailed the miracles the Hero performed using her level eight and nine abilities.

The first miracle. She created a baseball that flew up when she let go of it.

She changed the rules of the world completely. She probably changed the laws of physics so that the baseball was permanently unaffected by gravity.

Second, she created a fire that burns forever when she fought the Demon King. She got rid of the fire herself after the fight.

It feels like a napalm bomb when you read about it, but... Perhaps it was a modification of entropy? A fire that burns without having to be supplied any external fuel.

Third, the creation of a golden statue that doesn't move or get destroyed.

It was said that no thief had managed to actually steal away this statue since its creation. Perhaps she locked the location of the statue on a certain longitude and latitude permanently? She managed to fix a position of an object artificially...

Lastly, a miracle that anyone in this world knew of.

The Hero managed to push away a star that the Demon King summoned using her strength.

Literally.

Well, at this point, no level or item would really work... I turned to the last page of the report.

Level nine, Idea Modification.

The Hero created a dart that would always hit the center of the target no matter what and undid the effects of the wounds on her body. She even created a situation where ‘those that were beautiful got treated badly’ in the palace. Using this, she managed to block [Time and Dimension Destruction] and [Worldview Breakdown] cast by the Demon King–.

“Might as well be omnipotence instead of reality manipulation...”

The saint glared at me again and looked away. She seemed to want to say something but at the same time, she didn’t want to talk to me.

What in the world was she trying to do...

The money I currently had was thirty-two billion dollars. I honestly didn't know if I could beat the Hero with this much money. Perhaps it would be better to buy a life for the saint after she dies? If it was possible, that is.

The problem was, was she really worth that much money...

I fell deep into my thoughts as I watched the saint cook.

Chapter 61. Perfection

Necro walked beside me with the saint behind us on our journey to the centre of the island. The burnt grass beneath our feet rose up in a cloud of black ash whenever we took a step.

It's going to be a little close, isn't it...

The money I earned after selling all of the Summoner's items was 900,000,000 dollars. If we add my previous balance, the money adds up to 32,427,000,000 dollars. It'd cost money to lay down the groundwork as well, so this might not be enough money...

"Should I sell it?"

Necro turned to me as he cheerfully continued walking.

"Hmm? What are you planning on selling?"

"For now, [Grand Thief's Vault] and [Boiling Blood]. I don't need them anymore."

"You're not saying that just so that we'd hear it, right?"

"Of course not."

I would need the their powers for the place that I'm going to. Because I can't use mana.

“Aren’t you happy since this is the last part of our journey?”

“Of course I am! I can just see my future laid out before me. A future of success and delight! Hoho!”

His steps were light, and his face displayed a smile of utter delight. He was the complete opposite of the depressed saint.

Why?

Was he not depressed? Wasn’t it normal for someone to be worried? Afterall, his long-time comrade was in the dumps.

Was he not sad to hear that the saint was about to die in the near future?

This was far too different from the attitude he showed me in the past. What happened to the Necro that seemed to be about to cry when the saint first showed her problems? Necro changed the subject as I quietly watched him.

“Ah. Wouldn’t you have to buy some new abilities if you’re going to fight the Hero? You have to raise your stats as well. When are you going to do that? Why not do it now? Hmm? Don’t you want to?”

“Who knows.”

“Let’s do it now. We’re outside anyways. Isn’t it better to do it with all of us watching? Or is it not?”

I don’t get why he’s so hurried about this. Was he curious? Did he want to confirm something? Does he just want to change the topic? Well, I suppose it doesn’t matter. The calculations were all complete.

“Hold on.”

I stopped walking and activated Heart of Gold. The saint slowly closed the distance between us.

“.....”

To think I’d hesitate now... Even after making the decision between killing the Hero or instead to use the money to revive the saint, I was still hesitating. Was I doing the right thing? The saint looked at me activate Heart of Gold, then looked away uninterestedly.

“What? Why are you hesitating now? Want me to pick the abilities for you?”

I returned to reality after hearing Necro’s voice.

“...It’s nothing.”

Right. I already made my decision. I just have to follow my original plans. These are all just useless thoughts—. I sold everything that I didn't need anymore and opened the abilities page.

[> Heavenly Demon Technique: 50,000,000 dollars]

[Red Lotus Dominion: 11,000,000 dollars]

[Already Purchased: 83,000,000 dollars]

[Phase Shift: 12,000,000,000 dollars] ...

I can't buy the Heavenly Demon Technique, since I couldn't use mana. Then the first thing i had to buy was the Red Lotus Dominion.

[Red Lotus Dominion] – Rank: C+

– A theory of thermodynamics that a certain theorist came up with. It allows one to control heat up to 5000 degrees centigrade. At the same time, it allows the user to absorb a bit of heat for objects hotter than 5000 degrees.

This should allow me to deal with the eternal flame somehow. I don't know if I can completely block it, but it should allow me to lessen the damage I might sustain from it. I put it in my shopping cart and immediately clicked on the next ability.

[Phase Modulation = Phase Shift] – Rank: S+

– An ability that allows the user to shift the axis of the universe. If certain conditions are met, the user can dodge certain physical and mental attacks.

An ability that was a combination between dimensional teleportation and standard teleportation. Like the Red Lotus Dominion, it used an unknown form of energy. This should help me escape the Hero's Reality Manipulation. Since the battle was probably going to take place in the sky, I'd have to get something that would keep me up.

[Higgs' Rule] – Rank: B-

– An ability to manipulate weight and gravity.

I need a defensive ability as well.

[Eight-Layer Defense Matrix (八代空殻)] – Rank: S

– A slowing field composed of eight layers. Any potentially dangerous objects that enter this barrier will be slowed and marked. The slowing effect becomes amplified for each layer.

This should be good enough in terms of abilities. I shouldn't need any more offensive abilities. Any more would be useless in this war of attrition. Plus, the Hero's time stop ability and teleportation ability made me doubt if I could even hit her. I might as well just increase my attack stat directly. Speaking of that, I should go buy some of those now.

[> Health: 10,000 dollars]

[Mana: 20,000 dollars] [!]

[Attack: 100,000 dollars]

[Incantation: 200,000 dollars]

[HP Regen: 1,000,000 dollars]

[MP Regen: 2,000,000 dollars]

[Defense: 1,000,000 dollars]

[Magic Resistance: 2,000,000 dollars]

Currently, my defense stat was set at 101(+80). I'd probably have to set it to 2000(+80) if I want to block her attacks.

“Would raising Magic Resistance mess with your necromancy?”

“No? Probably not?”

I could feel a hint of nervousness from Necro's voice. It felt like he was hiding something, but...

“Is that so?”

I should be fine. I still haven't paid him back for a few things and killing the Hero should allow him to reach his goals. I wasn't planning on hunting him down for whatever he was planning on doing either. He was a person who gave me life as well as a second chance.

What was the worst he was going to do anyway? Rebel against the king?

I took my attention away from Necro and focused on my power again. Currently, my Magic Resistance was 75(+50). If I take a look at the Hero's strength and speed, Horganrel was virtually useless.

I should raise it to a thousand, just to be safe.

Same goes for health and health regeneration. I increased my health to 50,000 and upgraded my regen stat to be the same. This allows me to recover 50,000 every second, turning me pretty much immortal. I wouldn't need the saint's salvation ability with this. I upgraded my attack and spell stat, then checked my shopping cart.

[Shopping Cart]

[01] Red Lotus Dominion: 11,000,000 dollars

[02] Phase Shift: 12,000,000,000 dollars [!]

[03] Higgs' Rule: 850,000,000 dollars

[04] Eight-Layer Defense Matrix: 6,800,000,000 dollars

[05] Defense: 1,899,000,000 dollars [!]

[06] Magic Resistance: 1,850,000,000 dollars [!]

[07] Health: 498,200,000 dollars [!]

[08] Health Regeneration: 4,998,000,000 dollars [!]

[09] Attack: 1,994,800,000 dollars [!]

[10] Incantation: 1,000,000,000 dollars [!]

– Total: 31,901,000,000 dollars

– Balance after purchase: 625,756,303.60 dollars

<Some of these items cannot be refunded after their purchase.
Are you sure about buying them? Y/N>

Of course it's going to be a yes. I became enveloped in light after completing the purchase. I don't look any different compared to before, but...

Status [Dead][Slow][Suffocation][Weak][Cursed][Bound]

Level	1(EXP 0%)	HP	50000/50000(+0) <div><div></div></div>
Name	Jin (No Real Name)	MP	0/0(+0) <div><div></div></div>
Title	Menticide History's Worst Killer Heartless Monster	Attack	20000(+10)
Class.	Corpse	Spell	10000(+0)
Pers.	Pure Egoism	HP Regen.	50000(+0)
Power	Heart of Gold(Lv.5) (\$625,700,000)	MP Regen.	0(+0)
		Defense	2000(+80)
		Magic Res.	1000(+50)

Abilities

Whitehead(Lv.9)	Menticide(Lv.9)
Xenoglossy(Lv.2)	Magic(Lv.1)

Demon Eyes

Oracle(Rk.S-)	Floating Eye(Rk.D+)
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Jin

A Thousand Thunderbirds(Rk.C+)	Dematerialization(Rk.C+)
Red Lotus Dominion(Rk.C+) ^{NEW}	Phase Shift(Rk.S+) ^{NEW}
Higgs' Rule(Rk.B-) ^{NEW}	Eight-Layer Carapace(Rk.S) ^{NEW}

Equipment

Full Bloom(Rk.C)	Dragon Boots(Rk.D+)
Murderer(Rk.S+)	Hirganrel(Rk.C)

Commodities

--	--

I wonder what my level is equal to like this?

“I finished purchasing. I raised my defense and magic resistance. Let’s try test...”

The saint approached me while cracking her knuckles as I talked to Necro. Almost as if she’d been waiting for this for quite some time.

“...I won’t use the Eight-Layer Defense Matrix for now. I want to see how much damage I would take.”

As soon as I finished talking, the saint ran in with her strengthened body. She stomped her feet firmly into the ground and smashed my stomach with a shining buster unlike anything I had ever seen before.

Pshhh.

It seemed amazing and all that, but... It didn’t work. I felt like dying when I first got hit by it, but I didn’t feel anything now. Maybe she just got weaker?

“Ugh...!”

The saint beat at my stomach in anger. The damage accumulated was still zero though.

[I'm always honest. Each of my blows are filled with love.]

I thought of what she had told me in the past.

“This is good.”

I pushed away the saint lightly. The only thing she could do now was to watch. Not that I expected anything else from her.

“Next, to test my attack.”

I teleported in front of a giant boulder with phase shift. I flicked the boulder with ten percent of my power. Immediately the boulder that seemed to weigh at least fifty tons got blown away with a bang. The only sign that the boulder ever existed was the giant hole in the island I created. A small storm was created a while later and fire began to sprout from the path of destruction I just created.

“I'll have to be careful.”

Even the clouds shifted when I attacked with the miniscule amount of my strength. I moved back to my previous spot with phase shift and picked up the dumbfounded couple to our next location. Towards the source of magic that kept this giant piece of dirt afloat.

Chapter 62. Death From Above

No matter how much I think,

no matter how much I prepare,

life always presents me challenges. Almost as if it's asking me if I can take this on as well. In any case, this was the last one. I suppose I should try to tie it off pretty nicely. Failing here won't just earn me mockeries and laughters after all.

The current time was 3:30 am.

The sky island had gone into orbit in space thanks to Necro and the saint's powers. The place we were headed to was the edge of the Haze Republic. The place where the Hero's army was stationed. I walked out of the command room and looked up at the stars dotting the void of space.

“Nice weather today.”

The sphere of air around us let us breath in an environment like this. The Red Lotus Dominion and the Higgs' Rule created a habitable environment within the sphere as well. I used Heart of Gold to send the specialists I hired back to their original world. What they installed around the island were a set of weapons and machineries. I didn't have much time, so the preparation was a bit weak, but this should still be enough.

We're ready for war.

And we'll even be performing a preemptive strike as well.

Half of the rebellion would be sleeping about now. I should be able to take them all out if lady luck is on my side. It'd be unlikely though.

"You're actually going through with this? Are you really fine with that? No, you can't be. What if you fail?"

Necro asked me these questions with a worried tone. He had paled the moment he heard my plans and he still hadn't calmed down even now. I guess it really is difficult for humans to change.

"I'll send you back to your original world if this fails."

"No, even so... Damn, I thought I was a piece of trash, but you're worse, aren't yah? You really don't care about how you kill. Why do you even live like that?"

"Like you're one to talk."

The saint still hadn't said anything. Even when she heard of the plan, the only response I got from her was a slight twitch in her eye. Even better, there was no need for her to act this time.

[You're arrogant, deceiving, and you never even try to

understand others. I dislike you for that.]

That was the last thing she had ever said to me. Come to think of it, I never really talked to the saint all that much. I was always just stuck in my head, thinking about the future. Probably because I was annoyed by her.

The short, short autumn. A journey that took three months at best. The time I spent with her was...

Yeah. It wasn't too bad. ...Mm, if I was being honest, I might as well say that it was... ni..ce?

In any case.

“Then...”

Necro quickly stopped me before I left.

“Wait! Wait! Why are you in such a hurry? This is the crux of our journey. Don't you feel sad or anything? Don't you feel like a student about to graduate or something?”

“Not at all.”

“You're too much~ Why act so cool all the time? Anyway. Thanks for everything, you two. I'll give you two a nice present at the end of all this. You down?”

A celebration afterwards... Shouldn't be too bad.

“Just don't forget to revive me.”

“Ah! Of course! I keep all my promises. Just rest nicely after you kill the Hero, okay? Let's go together. We'd like to say our farewells before you actually go fight.”

I teleported the three of us to the edge of the island. We were thirty thousand kilometers above the sea, at Intermediate Circular orbit. So high that it was nigh impossible to make out the Haze Republic. The Hero's army was somewhere below us. Necro shouted in surprise after looking down and stumbling back a few times.

“Wow... They're probably not going to see us if we're this high. How thrilling! Ah, sorry, sorry. You don't have much time do you? Got anything to say before going into battle? Who knows? This might be the end for you here.”

“...You think?”

He was right. If I make even the tiniest mistake, if I fail to kill the Hero, I'd forever be unable to meet them ever again. Then the only time I have to return the ring was now... I walked up to the saint and took out a wallet from the vault. The saint stepped back and had a question mark hanging over her head.

That part of her never changed.

“Something you forgot.”

I handed her the frog wallet with the ring while saying this. It didn't mean much. The object simply didn't belong to me. It wouldn't be right for me to keep something that didn't belong to me.

“Don't lose it next time. It's important to you, isn't it?”

She might not remember it, but it was still an object that contained her wishes. The saint looked up for a second after receiving the wallet, then drooped her head again. She seemed to want to say a few things still, but...

Something must be on her mind.

I said my goodbyes after walking to the edge of the cliff. Then, I jumped off and fell straight down. The moment I escaped the sphere of air set on the island, I could feel the void wrap around my body. Even now, the sun was behind this planet. It was hard to even make out the continent from a place like this.

What I was planning on doing now was a review of all my previous plans.

First, we start with the Warrior. The plan to defeat him came from a very simple question I had at first. “If I acquired my power

in a place out of this world, would I still be able to use it?” Was it possible to use my power outside of this world? If I could deliver items to a place up in... say, Mt. Everest?

If that is possible, we could say that Heart of Gold is “not restricted by location.” Of course, this would mean that I could deliver objects in altitudes like Intermediate Circular orbit.

When I was up against the Warrior, I delivered 1,500,000 gallons of water inside the volcano. What if I delivered something else?

I thought about using a refrigerator at first, but the air resistance that I’d get from it would reduce the destruction far too much. I needed the object to go faster than one kilometer a second, so I ended up ordering a custom set of items from a popular tungsten workshop.

What ended up being created were ten thousand tungsten spears.

An imitation of the Rods of God. It was originally an orbital weapon designed by the United States in the 80s. By dumping rods around five meters in length and one hundred kilograms in weight, it was possible to create an explosion equal to around 11.5 tons of TNT. The actual program was shut down because of the costs, but— such a thing didn’t matter to Heart of Gold.

The army that Camille lead was composed of a million soldiers and 128 brave-class summoners. Killing them was my primary objective. If the Hero doesn’t respond too quickly, I should succeed.

4AM.

Once I reached the stratosphere, I was able to see the glowing spears above my head. So it really is accurate. It's good that I got some help from specialists. If I miscalculated the winds, the spears would have gone somewhere entirely different. I activated dematerialization, then used Higgs' Rule to increase the mass of the spears.

It only took an instant for the spears to penetrate through the atmosphere.

Pii-!

The crimson rods dropped right down onto the base of the rebellion. The first one to go was a soldier that was squinting his eyes to see the spears raining down from above. The spears left thousands of red lines up in the sky.

And soon afterwards, they dropped down on the ground and exploded with a blinding white light.

Kuoooo!

The destructive force from the gravitational force of the earth dropped directly on earth. The ground that the spears struck melted instantly. Some of them even exploded or flipped from the intense heat. The tents in the rebel base were ripped away along

with burnt corpses and plants.

What a sight to behold.

A dark red wave of heat moved across the earth, then moved back due to the vacuum generated in the centre. What was formed from this was an orange mushroom cloud. The rest of the ten thousand spears began to flood down one by one. Each one of them decimated the ground below, coloring the absolute blackness below me with a red light.

The Hero appeared right after this.

Chapter 63. Lightly At First

The real thing really is something else. When I saw her through the picture, the only thing I saw was a happy girl with tanned skin. Seeing her in real life made me feel an aura of charisma just emanating off of her.

Strength, warmth, charm, holiness.

I suppose... These elements of the Hero made her quite like the saint?

The Hero observed me from afar instead of putting a blade through my heart right away. Almost as if she was trying to find out everything about me with a single gaze. Her eyes reflected my helm, then my cloak, then back to my body.

“A wise choice.”

The best thing to do when encountering an unknown enemy was to scout him out first. The girl had reached the conclusion that approaching me was not the best of ideas. She should already know that most of her comrades have died. The fact that she still hasn't lost her cool just showed how much of a veteran she was.

Just how many battles did she go through?

“Still, you are quite foolish.”

I knew it already. She could only be the strongest within a limited timeframe. She might've been able to slice moons in her prime, but she was almost near death at this point of her life. She only looked normal on the outside. The only reason why she was still alive was purely because of her willpower.

At this point in time, she could only exert about 0.01% of the power she had in her prime. The internal wounds she had received from the Demon King still hadn't healed and her soul itself had been damaged beyond repair.

“Ever thought of what would've happened if you didn't raise up a rebellion in the first place?”

The mushroom cloud below had risen enough to almost reach the altitude I was at. The ground below us was true hell.

Screams, despair, sadness.

There were countless people asking to be saved. More people had survived than I thought, but they shouldn't last long. They were only alive thanks to the few brave-class soldiers.

Even now, the Hero should be considering whether to fight me or to save the people below. She seemed to have made up her mind sooner or later and gripped the handle of her sword.

“Not raise a rebellion? No, such a thing would never have happened. Rebellions aren't something a single person can raise,

Murderer.”

Natural. It didn't even feel like she was going to attack me until she actually got into her fighting stance. She wasn't trying to affect my conscious in any way. She was causing this to happen all from her martial prowess alone.

The Hero slowed time to an extreme and swung her sword at an inhumanly fast speed. This was the [Nation-dividing Sword = Glaive du Roi]. This technique that had a massive range of a 1600km not only split the night sky in two, but also left a blue line of plasma in its path.

Kagagagaga!

A thunderous roar came with it a moment later and took care of the mushroom cloud below in an instant.

...What a surprise.

If I didn't create an illusion of myself right below me, everything would have ended with that one strike. I sighed in relief inside and moved a bit away from the path of the attack. The place I was just at before was turning slightly hazy. I could even see blue lightning try to crawl out from it.

“As I thought...”

The Hero distanced herself from me even more. It seemed that

she didn't exactly expect me to dodge the strike. She seemed to want to figure out 'how' I dodged it, so that she wouldn't miss next time. This gave me around a second of time at most... My turn.

The second plan I was to go over was the Thief's.

At that time, I just put marble blocks on top of the hotel building, but—.

“What do you think would happen if something like this fell on the ground?”

The tests all turned out to be successful in the Zaiman desert. In the skies around us, hundreds of buildings appeared out of nowhere. There were multiples types of buildings that have been summoned. The windows on these buildings shattered as they fell and the buildings themselves grinded against each other during the fall, slowly merging into one object.

“Try to block this one, why don't you?”

I looked up at the buildings above us and gripped onto the Murderer.

The advanced weapon that Mirage Belt was said to have used.

It had an amazing description, but it turned out to be a simple dagger. But having such an amazing description and being such a useless item could mean two things. Either I've gotten a faulty

product, or have been looking at the weapon wrong.

For example, a television set.

I've been pretty much looking into the remote and been thinking "this tiny plastic rod can show videos"? All the while the actual weapon's been hidden somewhere else.

"Activate."

There were two reasons I went into orbit using the Sky Island. The first reason was to use this weapon. Because there was a need to input the coordinates manually at this height.

<Xenoglossy confirmed. Language has been changed. Biological signs return at -11.3. Psychological karma has been registered as -10,285.8. Comparing anima patterns. 0.3% difference confirmed.>

The countless stars behind the buildings disappeared, signifying that the true body of the Murderer had appeared. That black moon was the true form of this weapon. The planet-sized weapon that evolved as it continuously collected information about the world it was on.

The moon that the Hero sliced probably was this moon as well. That's probably what caused the coordinates to shift, causing the sword to become unlinked from its body.

<Confirmed manual coordinate input. The weapon has been

repaired 1%. Remote Space-time Slicing Mode activate. Check.>

Let's try testing it, shall we?

I sliced the empty air in front of me lightly with the Murderer. Almost as if I was trying to paint a picture. The planet above me recognized my motions instantly and got to action. It edited the physical laws of my surroundings and began to cut the coordinates I inputted through space-time. Almost like that time when the Warrior sliced the warship in half.

No, this was several thousand times more powerful than that. The falling buildings were cut by the planet's attacks and kept going further and further.

This attack might actually affect a nearby star given some time.

I stood between the sliced buildings as I continuously attacked the Hero. Since the actual attacks weren't coming from the sword, I was able to attack the Hero from pretty much any location.

I should probably be able to cut through anything in the world with this?

The Hero, who was already busy trying to slow down the buildings, was now stuck with the task of defending against my attacks as well. The buildings got chopped into tiny pieces as the Hero defended against my attack one by one. It was quite impressive, considering how each of these attacks had an

activation time that was infinitely close to zero and were invisible as well.

This was all within my calculations though.

I activated Heart of Gold and took out the items I had prepared beforehand. There were around three thousand of them. Three thousand barrels of explosive liquid. These barrels exploded to spread their contents out and about.

It was chlorine gas.

Unlike its simple production method, the resulting gas was extremely lethal. Even having 0.003% of it in the air caused the membranes in the body to start decomposing. Having 0.1% of it would cause organisms to die through breathing problems, cyanosis, and a pulmonary edema.

Something like this should be quite difficult for the Hero to manipulate, considering how it wasn't a visible solid like the buildings.

She should be tied down to manipulating the buildings and the gases now. She could always dump it to the side, but I'll prevent her from doing that.

The core of this plan was to continuously test the Hero's limits. If one method fails, I would add more elements that would make things difficult for the Hero. It wasn't like Reality Manipulation

could control everything.

Five minutes, now.

The battle would end by that time.

Chapter 64. An Unreachable Ideal

“Oh, Jin. Why are you called Jin?”

Because you are a designed human? Is that why you are called Gene?

Is it because you wish to grant wishes? Is that why you are called Djinn?

Because you wish to be human, Jin(人: human)?

Because you kill humans, Jin(刃: sword)?

Because you are like the tin man of oz, the one who desires Jin(心: heart)?

Hah, foolishness.

You are a scarecrow. A cowardly lion.

A speck of dust that would never be able to reach Jin(眞: truth).

Because you will return to the dust someday, Jin(塵: speck).

Your only mistake was that you never became suspicious of me till the end.”

All this time, Morto had been in charge of the reports, and they gave Jin all the information they had. Necro stood on the edge of the sky island as he burned a piece of paper between his fingers.

A page that was hidden away from the report of the Hero.

The paper that contained information on the most important ability of the Hero turned to ash. No matter how careful Jin was, it was impossible for him to catch onto missing information like this. There was no evidence that this piece of info existed in the first place, after all.

“I’m done with the idiot act. I wonder what kind of face you’ll show in the end? As a comrade. No, as a person who is exactly like me. I’m very curious indeed.”

This calm and calculating tone was extremely different from the usual Necro. This was his true self. The clown from before was now gone.

No, it was never there in the first place.

From the start, Necro had always been the strongest black wizard in the world.

“Let’s go finish this, shall we?”

Necro jumped off the cliff to follow the saint, who had already gone down before him.

*

[Conversation of the sword = Phrase D'Armes].

This was a skill that allowed the Hero to hypnotize herself to focus on battle, and only battle. Due to this, her sense of touch and smell gets minimized. Her linguistic capabilities get completely shut down while her sense of balance gets improved greatly. At the same time, her nerve conduction velocity and somatic nervous system becomes as fast as humanly possible.

With this, the Hero was able to dodge all of my attacks with ease that surprised even me, a designed human. It was almost as if she was a fish in water; she dug through the holes in my attacks and even managed to counterattack. The Hero faded away from view. When I teleported away, she just appeared in front of me as if she had expected me to be there in the first place.

This won't do.

I dodged her attack by dematerializing and threw the Hero an apartment building as a gift. Thanks to Higgs' Rule, the weight of that building multiplied by ten times. The Hero just split the building in two. The contents of the building spilled out of the building, which the Hero suspended in the air.

I used this chance to hide behind the buildings as I activated the Thousand Thunderbirds. I couldn't dodge her nonsensical attacks, so I decided that it would be better to simply hide. The wave of lightning that flew from in between the buildings managed to stop the Hero for a very short frame of time.

...So a million volts won't cut it.

The Hero's health bar was still full. It was a wonder how the previous demon king even managed to fight a monster like this. I had wanted to drag out the battle till the Hero became ragged, but I was still busy dodging her attacks. Whenever she tried to destroy the buildings, I just shifted them further up, away from her attacks.

Just three minutes now.

The one thing I needed to be careful of right now was the [False Blade = Hollow Edge]. The ability that let the Hero slice whatever she wanted. I should give up on trying to block it, since the Hero could always ignore everything that I set up and slice off my neck.

According to the reports, the skill worked by marking.

For example, black is a color that absorbs light. Due to this, it was possible to distinguish it from other colors by seeing how much it rose in temperature. The hero must be using a similar technique to distinguish between the target and the others.

There's a filtering system like Absolute Reflect.

It probably just filtered by body temperature. Which would mean that I would be able to block it with Red Lotus Dominion...

The problem was, the Hero didn't have just one skill.

Like how I tested her limits as more time passed, she sent me troublesome skills as well. Like now, for example.

[A Giant's Sword = Gigantic Sword]

A massive sword that was 150 km long and 20 km wide. This massive construct sliced the night sky in two. I didn't have time to shift away, dematerialization was still on cooldown, and I didn't have time to escape into the vault either. I got hit directly by the sword and crashed down onto a mountain below us.

Baaaang!

The shock was large enough to destroy most of the plant life on the mountain. Due to me using Higgs' Rule, the mountain now had a giant crater on top of it. I had a huge defense stat, so I wasn't damaged much, but...

This one might be dangerous.

I could see the Hero preparing her next attack above me. [Million

Blades]. Millions of tiny and large blades began to drop down to my location. Almost like a raging waterfall.

I couldn't dodge this.

Due to the skill that was to follow after Million Blade, [Sword Fish]. Even if I shifted away from my position, the swords would follow me.

It would be better to just make the Hero spend all her skills here.

The success rate of this plan would rise the more skills I forced the Hero to use. If the Hero manages to combine Hollow Edge with Sword Fish, an unblockable attack that follows the target would be created. Life was too unfair. It was too unlike video games where the main character at least had a chance of dodging. But who in their right minds would create holes in their attack? If they weren't confident about hitting the target, they wouldn't use such a big skill like this in the first place.

Kiii-!

A sharp wave of blades fell through the sky to my location. Almost as if she was trying to copy my initial attack.

I activated the Eight-layer Defense Matric. As soon as I did so, the sky above me brightened due to the all the plasma and flame. An ear-shattering sound soon followed.

Kagagaga-Kraaam!

The attack seemed fierce enough to erase the entire mountain off the map. Despite me having slowed their speed greatly, each blade seemed to be like a shot from a tank.

My body should have turned to a pulp right now.

But my defense of 2,000 and a health regen of 50,000 wasn't there for nothing. No matter how strong Million Blade was, it was in the end just a bunch of swords. The damage from each of the swords wasn't great. Their speed had decreased as well. Every second, my bones recovered and the wounds on my body disappeared.

The pain was... minimal.

I watched my health bar go left and right as I waited for the attacks to end. Was I being too careless?

The Hero got in a stabbing stance behind all the sword. What was wrapped around her sword was heat and lightning. Despite being so far from her, I could feel the heat from the sword. The Hero initiated her stab from five kilometers away.

[The Tyrant's Needle = Mad Stinger]

My eyes became cooked first due to the intense heat. An equally intense amount of pressure enveloped the mountain, as if to forbid

me from running.

Quickly, now...

A 0.01 second felt almost like an eternity. I barely managed to escape with Phase Shift. I looked up. The mountain that I had been standing on had completely melted and was now overflowing with magma. In front of me was the huffing Hero.

“This should be good enough.”

Time to go over the Summoner’s plan. I raised my arms, as if I was greeting the Hero for the first time.

“Now then—. Would you be able to block this?”

The Sky Island. No, the [Star of Destruction] fell from the sky. It was the same as the first time, where I threw buildings towards the ground, but... This time, the machine that kept the island up in the air was now working to bring it to the ground as fast as possible.

“Show me a miracle, Hero.”

The Sky Island was a massive ball of dirt that was 100 cubic kilometers. This should amount to at least 4,000,000,000 kilotons. A 1/1,750,000th of the moon’s mass. What kept this structure up now was working to keep it down.

What destroyed the dinosaurs was a meteor about 10 km in diameter.

If the Hero fails to defend against this, humanity dies. The mantle would shake violently and the surface of the planet would be absolutely decimated.

“—Save humanity.”

The Hero's face showed a change for the first time. A crown of light appeared on the Hero's head. She was finally using all of her power to stop the destruction from reaching earth.

[The limit].

Would the Hero be able to overcome her limit? Would she be able to save this planet? If she runs away to save herself, this plan fails. But.

There was no way she would run.

This much was evident from her face. I could see that she had made up her mind to sacrifice herself. As I thought...

“I don't understand. Why do you sacrifice yourself like that? The one thing that's most precious in the world is yourself. Does it matter if others die?”

The Hero didn't answer. Instead, she looked up at the red sky longingly. She probably found no value in speaking.

[No matter what happens, she won't run.]

[No matter what happens, the Hero will fight to save others.]

After all, what she was was an Unreachable Ideal that a failed product like me could never become.

Chapter 65. My Love, For You

Crimson flames burned under the reddish-blue sky. The scorched earth was littered with dead bodies that didn't even look remotely human anymore.

“I wanted him to kill more than this, but... That didn't happen did it.”

Necro was savoring the view as he walked upon the lifeless earth. This view, no, this scene of hell was where Jin truly belonged. This was something that Necro craved.

“I shouldn't have any interferences.”

The rebel army was almost obliterated with one attack. Even the soldiers that barely managed to survive were in no state to move. Necro thought that things were going better than he had thought as he raised his head. The first thing he saw was the pile of falling debris along with the red star behind it.

If the calculations were correct, that star should have the capability to destroy this world. Morto was against using something like this, but the plan fell through in the end. All thanks to the voting system they set in the beginning of the journey.

‘Did he expect this to happen at that time...?’

Now that he thought about it, the system for the distribution of

the spoils pretty much came from Jin. Perhaps all of this was within his calculations? Nonsense.

‘I should stop thinking random things...’

The atmosphere vibrated non stop even as he walked up the hill. Jin’s battles with Camille was having extremely powerful effects on the continent they were on.

“The strongest in humanity vs. the strongest in the world. It would be a lie to say that I wasn’t interested in the outcome. But well, it doesn’t matter who wins, does it.”

The conclusion of the battle was meaningless. All would go according to plan regardless of the outcome.

‘One step forward. The moment when the consciousness pulls itself free from the restraints of the physical world will come soon. The moment when I become god.’

The fruition of his wish was nigh. Even if something goes wrong and humanity dies, he would be satisfied. Because just like how Morto loves life, Necro loved death. Just like how Jin sought profit, Necro sought death.

That was all.

There was no evil intent in what Necro was about to do— neither was there regret. He was simply repeating what he had been doing

since his birth. Necro managed to reach the top of the hill and found himself staring at a ball of bright light. He could see Morto at the center of this light.

‘So the saint is still a saint, despite having recovered her memories?’

If there was a troubled person near her, the saint would help the person. Just like now. Morto Hai was a person who did everything to save anyone she could.

‘I wonder how long she’d last. Five minutes? Ten minutes?’

Her white skin was burning into itself and her brown hair had turned completely white. She was drenched in her own blood. Below her was a pool of black blood that continuously flowed away to somewhere else. The saint was asking for death.

Necro tried to restrain himself from laughing as much as possible as he watched the last moments of this dying candle.

*

I sliced them.

I sliced the Hero’s wrists and elbows. Her hips and hamstrings. Her stomach and breasts. Her cheeks and shoulders. I riddled her body with tiny wounds as she tried to stop the star of destruction.

Her body was already drenched with blood. She still had the calmness of the Hero about her, but she was no longer a lily, but rather a rose.

Was this enough?

The Hero did indeed manage to save the world. The star of destruction had stopped and the rest of the threats had been neutralized as well. Even if she dies now, Sky Island and the buildings would stay forever stay suspended in the sky. Just like her previous miracles.

“Almost at the end...”

I parried her sword once and leapt above her.

She seemed too tired to even fly. I should let her rest.

“—Fall, justice.”

The Hero dropped down through the buildings from my kick. A cloud of dust rose around her when she crashed into the earth.

Didn't seem like she was dead yet...

I shifted down to her altitude and swung my hand. With a whoosh, the cloud of dust disappeared.

Does she not have the power to fight back?

The Hero was just looking up at me silently. Her eyes were the same as before. Pure, kind, and absolutely devoid of any hate.

Why was that?

I asked her a question. Out of curiosity.

“Aren’t you mad? Don’t you want to kill me?”

The Hero looked away instead of responding back. Her eyes reflected the blue autumn sky above us.

“...Nice weather today.”

Her voice was high-pitched. Girlish.

“It would’ve been perfect if we all just went out to play.”

What was she talking about?

“Mr. Romeo would complain about how he’d rather train. Chrono would hide away after staying for just a few minutes. Iris would be running around chasing her summoned beasts everywhere. Then, Morto would gather everyone with her packed

lunch.”

The Hero smiled brightly even as she bleed to death. Her fading eyes seemed to be looking at somewhere extremely far.

“Just what went wrong? We all just wanted to save more people...”

Asking such a question to a failed product was quite troublesome.

“On such a nice day like this, just like that time... Everyone gathered together, smiling... ..”

I couldn't hear the rest of her fading words.

She was probably reminiscing. Back at the days when they first went to kill the Demon King. When they were all happy and free.

The light in her eyes disappeared as her breathing came to a stop.

I wonder where people go after they die?

Since they don't ever open their eyes again, they must be dreaming a dream where they never want to wake. Yes, a happy dream. I closed the Hero's eyes and moved to our promised location. My job would be done after I gave Necro the Hero's corpse. After that is our goodbyes.

Ah, was this it?

I saw a bright light the moment I shifted my location. The light soon disappeared though. It completely disappeared the moment I managed to get there. And a girl fell powerlessly with it.

“Mor...!”

To think this would happen while I faced off against the Hero... What the hell was Necro doing? I realized just what the saint did after I looked at her brown skin and white hair.

“You idiot...”

I put down the corpse in my hands and ran to Morto. The moment I grabbed onto her, my hands caught fire.

“Kuh!”

What’s this? This was almost like the time when I first met her. It felt like I was touching fire. Was this because I overexerted my powers?

“Wake up.”

The saint managed to open her eyes when I shook her. Her dried lips twitched a bit, but no sound came out. What was she...

“Camille...”

I turned my head to the sound behind me and saw Necro hugging the Hero's corpse.

“What in the world were you...”

I didn't finish my sentence. I felt the man's intent from the black magic that began to envelope my body. He was restraining my body using Necromancy. He was planning on turning me into a doll now that the work was done.

I had expected this, of course. The man was being extremely suspicious from the start.

“You can't pierce through my magic resistance with just this much power.”

“Ah, is that so?”

The reason why I learned magic in the first place was because I was afraid something like this would happen. Necro smirked when he heard me and lowered his head.

“Then you probably expected this as well?”

“Wha...”

Necro put his lips on the Hero's in front of our very eyes. A love for corpses. Necrofilia. A [Disease of Death].

I knew he swung that way, but...

I had been wondering if he was trying to come out of the closet, but froze when I saw what happened next. Not just my thoughts. My entire body as well. It was almost as if the body didn't belong to me. It felt as stiff as my body did when I first came to this world. The black mana around my body even started to get inside my body.

"This is...?"

My control over my body began to lessen. I was still conscious, but it felt like my body was a different being altogether. Even so, right now...

It was possible to resist. I wasn't just relying on magic resistance in the first place. If I just use the abilities I bought to deal with necromancy...

"Why...?"

They didn't activate. Phase Shift. Dematerialization. The vault. It was almost as if they had all been sealed....

Could it be...

My consciousness went mad as I realized what might have happened. The possibility that Necro hid information from me. The possibility that certain information might have been modified.

But what would this achieve...?

Necro put the Hero's corpse in the Hero's coffin and stood up. He was now looking directly at me.

"Necro Kill, the greatest black wizard in the world, orders you. Jin Whitehead—."

A black suit and a black necktie. He always wore funeral clothes and pulled back all of his hair behind him. Like a businessman. The person I considered my saviour, the person who I considered to be my friend occasionally, said this to me.

"Kill the saint."

"What...?"

Warm blood was splattering against my face by the time I realized what he said. My sword had gone straight through the saint's heart. I felt the saint tremble within my arms.

Mm? I don't understand.

“Why her?”

“Pft.”

Necro responded with a restrained laughter.

“Why?”

Necro let out a bit of a laugh and asked me a question back with a tone filled with arrogance.

“Why indeed? Whyyy? Why did I not kill you and instead decide to kill the saint?”

“...There’s no need to do this, is there? She was already dying.”

“Curious?”

Necro smiled as if he had just heard something ridiculous. He bowed as he looked into my face.

“Why don’t you think about it carefully in the underworld? You like it, do you not? Thinking.”

Was he like this from the start? Necro checked his wristwatch as he spewed a few more words of mockery.

“Oh my. Look at the time. I should go. I have an event to attend to, you see. You should know, right? I’m a busy man. Well, it was nice working with you. And... You worked hard. And since you worked hard... Dust to dust, ashes to ashes. I would like to shake hands with you before I go, but I’m quite scared of you. Please understand.”

Necro went back to his usual cheerful tone as he disappeared over the hill. At the same time, the mana that connected me to him got completely cut off. My body began to rot away rapidly as a result.

This is how it ends?

“...Somewhat boring of an ending.”

Was this how evil ends? I attempted to open the vault after putting the saint down on the floor. There’s a potion inside. If I just get her to drink it...

Huh?

“Did it get completely sealed?”

Even the stats that I raised with Heart of Gold seemed to have disappeared. Was this the curse that appears once you kill the Hero? Oh boy... I was more useless than I thought. I should have learned to save other people if I knew this was going to happen.

The saint was slowly dying. She probably couldn’t even

regenerate from using her power too much. Just like the Warrior.

Seeing her slowly die on the floor reminded me of what I had seen in the past.

Was this how she dies?

It's not really sad or disappointing. Well, I gave up on living once already, so I guess it was nonsensical for me to care about someone else's death.

“Was this the part where I would've cried if I was a normal person?”

It was pure curiosity. Now that we both didn't have much time left, I suppose asking such a question was alright. The saint lifted her arm to stroke my cheek.

“Idiot...”

“Fine, I admit it. I acted arrogant all the time and managed to get backstabbed in the end.”

The holy fire got weaker as well. It felt warm to touch her, so I guess I'll keep holding her hand for now. Right. Since we were both about to die, I guess now was a prime time to ask this question.

“By the way. I wanted to ask you this from the start, but... Do you like me?”

The saint stayed silent for a moment, then let out a snort.

“Hah. You sti...ll... misunderstand people... too much... Who... would... you.”

“You still manage to say something offensive while dying, eh? So I was mistaken, after all? That’s fine then.”

The saint pinched my cheek.

“I didn’t... say I hated you?”

If I was someone like her, I probably would respond to her like such. I used the hand I wasn’t using to hold her hand to pinch her back. I went back to caressing her gently after that.

“I guess I can’t even say that famous quote anymore. ‘Because I’m already dead’.”

This was a life I gave up in the first place. I earned a second chance in a world like this, but I still managed to be a foolish and worthless being.

“We always had different views on everything. I wonder if we’ll end up going to the same place after death? Ah, I suppose not. I’ll

be going to hell.”

“Idiot... What are you... saying? Mr. Murderer, even hell... would not want someone like you.”

“Is that so...”

The saint faintly smiled as she managed to whisper her next words. She seemed to lack the strength to speak properly now.

“My name...”

“Hm?”

“My real name... Aliyah Herz...”

Herz was a last name meaning heart in German. Aliyah was a name that meant precious and holy.

“Aliyah Herz... A good name.”

She smiled brightly when I said her name for the first time. This was the time to say our goodbyes now. I could see the light in her eyes become faint. She was trembling, so I hugged her tightly. Her voice was so quiet that I had to put my ear next to her lips.

“Mr. Murderer, your name is...”

“My name?”

“Morto Hai... Use... that as...”

Putting a girl’s name on a guy... Pulling something like that even at the end... Well, I’ll take it. I was sick of my family name anyway.

“Morto, Hai.”

Extremely faint. An extremely faint crown of light was set on her head.

“Aliyah...?”

“Keep... Living.”

This light of hers flickered a few times weakly. Then, suddenly, just like how a dying life shined brightest in its last moments, the crown of light became bright enough to cover her whole body.

Could it be...

“For you, the one I love, I give you my feelings, my heart...”

The warm, white light trickled into my body like drifting white ash. My damaged skin became restored as feeling returned to my

body. I could feel warmth return to my body. And, for the first time, I felt a thump.

The heart that I received for the first time began to beat.

“I love you.”

The saint whispered this with a weak voice. Almost as if this was the only chance for her to say it.

“I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love... I...”

Her voice soon became too weak to follow. Even the warmth in her fingers disappeared.

“Eh? What is... this?”

I couldn't see in front of me very well for some reason.

“Why...?”

The droplets of water refused to stop. They kept dropping onto the saint's face without stopping. At this moment, something within the saint's body seemed to fly off into the sky. She had said that life was a precious, weighty thing, but...

“...It's light.”

It was impossible to be able to come in contact with her overflowing heart now. Even if I wanted to talk to her more. Even if I wanted to walk with her more.

“Aliyah Herz...”

This name was hers, and only hers.

This heart of hers that I received... This life.

I should continue living like her. I would get crushed by the weight of my sins in the future, but... Until then, until I can meet her again.

I should preserve it well so that I may return it to her.

Like this, after being given a new life from her in this world... I cried like a baby as I repeatedly said sorry.

—

My honesty, and my love.

For you.

Chapter 66. Funeral March

3 months ago, inside a giant cathedral with open windows. Here, Necro was giving his lecture to his students.

“From the time when magic was all but a form of worship, all the way till the present, blood was a prominent ingredient in sacrifices and contracts. If you have to ask the question why, the answer would always involve the theory of mana’s hydrophilic properties.”

Necro scanned the students in the room after writing down his words on the blackboard.

“Mana resides in water. Due to this, it is possible to say that all humans are walking potions. This is the reason why the Nosferatu, commonly referred to as the vampires, drink blood. They are not looking to acquire the nutrients in the blood, but rather the mana — the life force of a human being. This is how they can live eternally.”

He stopped talking after seeing about half of the students raise their hands. He motioned one of them to speak. A boy wearing glasses carefully voiced his question.

“According to what you said, shouldn’t wizards be able to live eternal lives as well? Mana is equal to life force. As the living, we should have more dominance over the undead when it comes to mana.”

Necro's eyebrow twitched when he heard the word dominance.

“Dominance? Would you care to explain why you chose that word?”

“From a biological perspective, it's easier to lengthen a person's lifespan than to revive a dead being. I chose the word dominance for that reason.”

The genius wizard who managed to become a professor at the age of twenty-five looked around to see if those around him agreed.

“Death is inferior to life. It would take forever if we try to discuss this topic, so I suppose it's better for me to ask a question instead. Is god dead, or alive?”

Necro sat down on a desk in front of him.

“There shouldn't be any need to introduce a philosopher from my world to you. Like you said just before, god should be dead from a biological perspective.”

But god is not inferior to humans.

“Based on how you define life and death, a biological death can be the second stage for life. Monks continuously experience near-death experiences to get closer to god. From this, we see that death is something that liberates one from the limits of the physical body and elevates one's state of being. Perhaps we can even say that

death is a form of a ceremony that would allow a human to become god.”

Those in the cathedral all began to mutter amongst themselves with the word heresy on their mouths. Necro simply smiled in response to this.

“It was a joke, of course. Death is a tragedy. Life should be preserved with care. Now, back to the original question. Why do wizards have limited lifespan despite their overflowing mana? They can live long, but not forever. The answer to this question is that the physical body is unable to contain the amount of mana it possesses.”

Just like how the power of regeneration was capable of causing cancer. A wizard would, at some point in life, have to shed their limits.

“This must be the case for everyone here, but the goal of a wizard apprentice is to become a wizard. Then, what would be required for a wizard to become god?”

A normal death. If a single person’s death is not enough for a wizard to become god...

“More death than one might expect—.”

A smile crept up Necro’s mouth when he heard Dennis Brain speak as he wrote on the blackboard.

*

[Thank you for boarding. This train is headed for Hope, and it has depa...]

The train stopped. A young man wearing sunglasses immediately jumped off. At the next station, a girl was wearing a large hat covering a large part of her face. After her was an old couple with a thick scarf around their necks. The fifty-two corpse dolls that had been disguised as simple tourists eventually reached their designated location. What each of them had in their arms was a set of spellbooks that Necro had prepared over a long period of time. 25,000 pieces of paper in total.

A corpse doll at the northmost part of the republic was the first to go. It vomited out black blood and drenched the two spellbooks in its hands. Black light shot out from the book into the air. Soon after, fifty-one more columns of light appeared all around the republic and met up above the center of the nation. Almost like they were forming a giant birdcage.

The completed structure was a field that enveloped the entire Haze Republic. A giant version of the barrier they had used to kill the heroes.

‘The pages that I spent for this so far adds to ten thousand. This should take the wizards about a day to destroy the barrier.’

That was enough. Necro, after seeing that the barrier was

completed, immediately activated his earth magic. He had studied nonstop for one entire year for this moment— what areas of the nation would be hit the hardest by an earthquake and about how many people would die according to what magic would be used.

He had already finished his calculations.

What Necro was planning on doing now was not a simple terrorist attack performed by one person to a nation. It was a one-sided massacre.

His first attack caused the death of a hundred million. The affected areas would soon be swept by a giant tsunami of water. The souls of the dead would then be trapped by the cage that he had built, which would be fuel for him to evolve into a god.

“Before that. I suppose I’ll have to take care of this first.”

It takes time for the earthquake to actually activate. He could hide until then, but he decided to show himself openly to the army. The government had dispatched 2.5 million soldiers to deal with Necro. There were a hundred wizards and ten thousand summoned people included in this mix.

These people were quite confused as to why the sky had suddenly gone dark. They tried using magic in order to counter it, but the barrier wouldn’t even budge. The only person who should be able to get out of this was Demonic Walker, but...

“This should serve to be a nice greeting.”

Necro wiped off the blood on his kitchen knife as he threw the cold corpse inside the Hero's Coffin.

“Hah. I've waited so long...”

He put his bloody left hand over his face. The smell of the blood made him grin.

It took him five years.

Five years, ever since the demon king appeared in the world. It wouldn't have been possible if the war didn't happen. It would have been even harder without Jin.

“Now, let's get on with the party shall we?”

Necro's hand began to shine. This immediately caused the skies to act strangely. Thousands of coffins began to drop down.

“—Come, [Hero's Coffin].”

A white coffin, a golden coffin, a black coffin and a red coffin appeared side by side. There were coffins as big as a fingertip, and fingers that were big enough to block a massive fraction of the horizon.

“Open.”

The coffins all opened to reveal the darkness inside. The soldiers all became speechless when they looked up. The comrades they fought with and the heroes that fought for them were all looking down at them from the sky. The next moment—

The red star up above darkened. A red light instead appeared in the eyes of the dead heroes, forming a red cross up in the sky.

Clack.

One of the soldiers dropped his gun in fear after witnessing what he had just seen. No one had told them what was about to happen, but they all instinctively knew what was to transpire soon enough.

Clack, clack, clack.

The soldiers’ teeth began to clack in fear. Like a drop of ink dropped onto paper, the fear spread far and deep through the entire army.

“Now, my heroes... Show me. Show me the dance of death. Sing me the song of death...”

Necro lifted his arms like the conductor of an orchestra. With the false night set behind his back, he commanded the dead heroes to attack.

Baang! Kraam!

The heroes caused a massive explosion of death just by landing. Necro looked upon this on with a delighted look on his face. Mad, passionate words spilled out of his mouth without rest.

“Genocide. Leave no one alive. Everyone dies. Massacre, slaughter, annihilate. Kill, kill, kill. Show me carnage. Butcher those who squeal like pigs. Exterminate those who try to run. Crush those who try to fight. Poison them burn them hang them crush them devour them strangle them destroy them slay them melt them execute them suffocate them.”

His pitch-black pupils brightened with fire.

“Perhaps the five traditional forms of death aren’t enough for variation? Crushing them under wheels or steaming them in steel pots should be nice. Burning to death and freezing to death. Buried to death and squished to death. Drowning to death and strangled to death. Stabbed to death and beat to death. Flogging and lynching sounds good as well. Ah, of course, just cutting them to death won’t do. Kill and destroy. Ignore their pleas for life and their last wishes as you lead all these heretics to their final destination of life.”

It simply wouldn’t do to just chat away in this glorious event. Necro joined in on the fun and watched as a throwing knife targeted towards his head was reflected away from him.

“Necro...!”

The person who was running towards him was the Accelerator, Speanol. The man probably realized that Necro was the one behind all this in an instant.

He was a former comrade after all.

Speanol dodged the reflected knife and smashed Necro with a giant black sword. No, he ‘tried’ to smash Necro. Before he could do that, someone blocked his path.

“What in the...?”

Speanol looked at Camille with eyes filled incertitude. It was almost like she was there from the start. She blocked the sword with just two fingers and threw it away. Speanol tumbled back a few steps and dropped down in shock.

“Eh? Why...?”

“Why is the Hero here... is that what you were thinking of asking?”

Necro bowed to the trembling man before him.

“How is it? Seem like the real thing much?”

“Real...?”

“I was surprised as well, to be honest? I didn’t expect her body to be so strong.”

This doll here was but nothing but a shell of the former hero. Because she was already dead, the doll could only use ten percent of her power. It wasn’t possible to use her power either, unlike the other heroes. But even with this, she was invincible.

“How regrettable. I would have put Romeo in my collection as well if it wasn’t for his useless power... I suppose it doesn’t matter, does it? I never was very friendly with the guy. Plus, I have these three.”

Two more people appeared beside Necro as soon as he said this. A girl with severe burns on her face and a black man with white hair.

“Lady Iris... ! Mr. Chrono...!”

Speanol’s eyes widened. Only now did he realize what Necro did and what he was planning to do.

“Necro!”

“Ah, what now? Just call me out once would you? Hah, my god... I thought you went home after that thing in Volez. Why did you have to come here and ruin your life? I have to kill three friends now because of you.”

“Wait, are you actually...?”

Speanol didn't continue. Chrono had put a spear through his head. Necro watched his old friend drop down onto the floor powerlessly while he just stretched.

“Man~ It feels good to take care of my friends like this~ You really have to take care of your past life before becoming god. Don't you think so?”

Camille might be a simple meat doll, but the other two still maintained their consciousness. They simply couldn't move or talk without Necro's explicit permission. Necro smiled at the two and slowly made his way forward. If his estimations were correct, the army should be destroyed within an hour. Once this happens, he would go for the king's personal guards.

“I should resupply my troops just in case.”

Necro gathered his mana and blew it out in a single huff.

“Ah—.”

It wasn't a simple utterance. The soldiers of the army reacted strongly to this rumbling sound.

“He's trying to utter his spell!”

“Stop him!”

They attacked with a desperate shout. Hundreds of magic spells and throwing weapons powerlessly reflected off Necro.

“The end of life is but a tower of rotting meat–.”

A spell. An act of making a wish to the gods, commonly known as the “song of the soul”. Of course, one could make this wish to evil gods as well.

“You, the one who makes poor souls stray from their paths to heaven into the path of pain and torture.”

The air shook the more he spoke. Whispers began to come from the nearby forests.

“The holy mother of all the tortured vomiting corpses.”

The soldiers backed away, realizing that they were all trembling in fear. They all looked down subconsciously, and their eyes strayed from the dark earth to the top of the black-red columns of light forming the cage.

“This... is...?”

A giant skinned body of a woman came into view. It almost

seemed as if someone had dissected a giant and put it on display. The soldiers who had survived Necro's initial attack froze after seeing this beast.

Gurgle, crack, fwoosh!

The holy mother vomited black blood, which turned into a giant river below. The earth trembled like a beast that was just skinned.

“Ahhhh!”

Soldiers were being dragged from all over the place.

“Hii...!”

A dark red tentacle grabbed one of the soldier's legs. He quickly tried to shoot it, to no avail. He was immediately lifted into the sky and got dumped into the holy mother's mouth. From this, they would be butchered and converted to a being who seeks death.

This was black magic–

What Necro had used till now was something he had learned as a 'hobby'. This magic, filled to the brim with hatred for the living, was the true form of black magic. This was the reason why Necro was dubbed the title of the strongest black wizard.

“We're done here, and now...”

Necro walked down to a nearby town once the army was nearly done with. At the same time, he ordered the corpse dolls all over the country to make their next move. A magic that was cast through the use of corpses.

The evil that had rested in the darkness till now was brought into the real world thanks to the black wizard's mana.

Centipedes craving human flesh dug into human skin. Cursed trees stuck their roots into nearby people and sucked up their blood. A million rats appeared from the ground. Soon, the earthquake would hit and the nation would fall into even more chaos.

Necro shivered in delight as he cast more magic on the villagers running away.

“Oh dear, where do you think you're going? Celebrate a bit. Today's my birthday, don't you know?”

Black mana enveloped the villagers. They turned stiff like corpses and their hair caught on fire. Their bodies were frozen, but their sense of pain wasn't. These people, who had turned into human candles, rose up into the sky. There were exactly twenty five of them.

“Kyahhhh!”

The people screamed in pain as their heads burnt in. They soon flew towards the ground like missiles and exploded above those who ran away. Their appendages exploded into countless pieces and their burning body fat set the buildings aflame.

“A birthday song and fireworks, all for me. Very good!”

Necro clapped his hands in delight and spun back.

“Now that my mood went up, I suppose I should make my way to my target.”

A halo appeared around Demonic Walker's corpse. The surroundings changed and the two people were transported to a different place. From the edge of the country, to the Stair Village. From the Stair Village, to the Zaiman desert. From the Zaiman desert, to the town of Volez.

And finally.

A giant hill presented itself to Necro with his final teleport. On the top of this hill was a grey castle where the king resided.

Chapter 67. Eternal

I lifted my head from under the shadows of the gravestone. The golden sun slowly set over the horizon, painting the sky a deep red. Under it was the Haze Republic enshrouded in darkness.

Necro must be inside there.

All in order to accomplish his old dream. To do that, he was to massacre everyone inside his barrier.

“What would you have done?”

I unwrapped the saint’s bandages from my arms and put my dirt-ridden hand onto my chest. A warm, gentle pulse rang out, collecting mana from the surroundings.

The only thing that had been sealed was my power and the abilities derived from it. The bandage that had been gifted to the saint by a flower fae returned to its original form from magic. Like a full bloom of flowers. White particles of light appeared from the bandages, leaving a flowery scent behind it. When I put my hand on it, the particles faded away. What was left was a single magnolia flower.

I lay the flower on the saint’s grave and stood up.

“I’ll be back, then.”

There might be no profit. There was even a chance that I would fail. But I made up my mind that I wouldn't run anymore.

*

When one leaves the shelter through the back door, a cemetery surrounded by maple trees appear. At this place, Necro was dancing whilst singing Michael Jackson's Thriller. He would jump up on an occasional gravestone, or kick a lantern for dramatic effect.

"Under the moonlight you see a sight that almost stops your heart."

A hand dug itself out of the cold ground. The hand that had been decorated with nail art was, without a doubt, Kirisaki Hatsume's. A muscular hand and a slender one rose out as well. Soon enough, Bruno Balter and Benny Guts dug their way out of their graves.

A total of five hundred.

Necro did a ceremonial jig as he looked on at the people who had come to greet him. The king's personal army, composed of many former heroes and the powerful wizards he once used to work with. Necro gave the troop that had surrounded him a wink.

*

"What the hell is everyone doing?! Why can't we contact

anyone?”

A man whose neck and chin had practically fused together shouted furiously at a wizard kneeling before him. This squealing mess of a man was the Haze Republic’s king. The man who controlled the nation with the prime minister laid out at the front. The reason why this man was so agitated was because of Necro. The wizard who had been trying to contact the king’s army was constantly apologizing.

“It’s just that... They haven’t responded since a while back...”

“You’re like this because of a single wizard? Do you even know how much money I poured into you bastards? You people are lower than dogs...!”

The king let out a long sigh and leaned back on his throne. A sense of ominousness had overtaken him since a while back. The king thought about running away through the secret path, then raised his head as he noticed that the room was strangely silent.

He hadn’t heard anyone come in...

The door was open. Necro was standing at it with two girls at his side. These two girls were someone that even the king knew of-the hero Camille and the summoner Iris. The king quickly tried to call someone and ended up finding Chrono taking his spear out of his wizard’s head.

Could it be that he stopped time...?

He gripped onto his seat in order to hide the fact that he was trembling, but he realized that he couldn't exert any strength.

“Did you wait long?”

Necro threw the king a head as he left a bloody trail behind him.

“Here, a gift.”

Thunk, roll...

The head stopped moving after rolling itself in front of the king. It was the prime minister. Seeing the painful face on the minister's face made the king start thinking. What did Necro want? What was he thinking? The king barely managed to swallow once before managing to ask his question.

“W-what do you want? If it's money, I can give you as much as you want! If it's power, I can give you that too...! No, do you want to be king? I can do anything...”

Necro snorted when he saw the king try to pawn off everything just to hold onto his dear life.

“Money? Power? Sorry, but I'm not very interested in those things.”

“Then why...”

“Ah~ Why am I killing so many? Well, the reasons are countless aren't they? Everyone has their own story, right?”

Necro began counting with his fingers as he walked to the king.

“For my happiness. For my future. For my entertainment. For letting out stress. To kill people I dislike, and to prove to others that my worldview is correct. It won't be accepted in a moral standpoint, but in my case... Right. Maybe because I was born like this?”

A born psychopath. Even before he got his power, he was a person who thoroughly enjoyed destroying the lives of others.

“You'd understand how annoying this is if you just knew how bothersome murder was. To be honest, death is the truth in life. It's really fun if you kill a man. More than anything. More than any kind of experience. It's a one of a kind pleasure that nothing can imitate.”

Necro put his face centimeters away from the king and grinned.

“It's just like hunting. No, it's hundreds of times better. And you can become a god to boot! How profitable, no?”

The king put his trembling hand into his pocket. But before that, Necro grabbed onto his arm.

“No, no. Don’t do that. I came all the way here for you.”

The king’s body became frozen like a corpse due to Necro’s mana. The only thing he could do now was to watch as Necro extended an arm towards his chest.

Sha...

There was no resistance. The fingers just slid right into the king’s chest. The king widened his eyes in shock.

“What in the...!”

“What should be good for the first one I wonder?”

Necro stopped breathing for a second as he made his happy decision. His arm expanded for a brief second and a cracking sound came from the king’s body.

“Oh~ This is nice.”

Necro’s arm moved. The king managed to see something white get dragged out of his chest.

“Bone...?”

There was no pain. Despite having one of his ribs ripped out, there were no wounds nor marks left on the body.

[Dissection Eyes]

A demon eye capable of letting one look into and affect a person's insides. It was developed for medical purposes at first, but Necro took interest in the fact that it could dissect someone alive.

“I would have cooked you after the dissection if I had the time. How unfortunate.”

Crack. Creak.

Necro skillfully removed the eleven pairs of ribs along with the sternum as he looked into the king's eyes.

“Do you even know how long I have waited for this day?”

Necro opened his mouth in the terrified king's face. His jaw dislocated itself to widen itself to an inhuman size. What was inside his mouth was a bottomless pit filled to the brim with teeth.

The king let out a mad laughter. Shortly after, the entire castle was struck by a violent earthquake.

I walked up the hill. Once I passed the cemetery that seemed to have been dug up by someone, a downhill slope appeared. I looked up at the castle on the cliff from this spot. The path to the castle was lit up with a red light.

“It’s been a while.”

Familiar faces had come out to greet me. The Man-eating Lion. Nail Hunter. Slenderman. The Ghost Forest. Unknown Reason. Fragile.

They discovered a living man and rushed in with the other corpse dolls to destroy it. To these things, that had been letting out screams of pain, I could only say one thing.

“Silence—.”

At a hand’s length away, the corpse dolls all came to a rigid halt. Almost as if someone had pressed the stop button.

The process was rather simple.

Necromancy was but a branch of magic. A form of telepathy where the user controls the corpses using a remote. If I just sever the connection between the user and the corpse, the corpses would freeze till the connection would resume. It was a form of a safety device. To prevent the corpses from going berserk in case the user

goes unconscious. And I could see exactly how it worked after becoming a wizard.

“Necro Kill. No, Bi Seokil(七ター).”

The wizard whose name was composed of the character of death(死). I'll show you what I can do. I used my mana to connect to the real world. To a wizard, a name was something that functioned as a pointer to their location in the physical world. It is possible to seize control of their magic if one had this information.

Almost like a form of hacking called snipping.

Lastly, I needed to analyze the magic performed on me, neutralize it, and recreate it to fit me.

Telepathy. Name. The necromancy he used on my body. The floating eye.

Without these, this entire plan wouldn't even have been possible. I closed one of my eyes. The floating eye that I had modified gave me access to up to 76,000 eyes. What came into my view was the entire republic. The earth that was filled with corpse dolls. Their bright red eyes seemed almost like a giant wave of evil. A total of 2.52 million corpses. I got the message that I had been connected to their network and uttered my spell.

“-Away with you, false candles.”

With a little puff, the red light all around the country began to disappear. Almost as if a black wave of darkness was engulfing the sea of red. The corpse dolls around me fell back as well.

I wonder what Necro's thinking right now?

I calmly walked under the night sky. Once I reached the entrance of the castle, the doors opened by itself for me.

He must have been watching me from afar.

I passed the corridor filled with corpses and reached the room where Necro was. I could see a corpse that seemed to have been impaled on the head with a spear and a messy corpse that used to be the king.

He must have been eaten alive...

Necro made a face that showed that he was glad as soon as he saw me from his throne. With the blood on his chin.

“Oh~ You were alive? No, ‘you became alive’? Man~ I thought this might happen... I’m so bad with endings, right? Did the saint give it to you? Or did you buy it?”

He still seemed talkative and relaxed. Must be because he still had his Overdeath ability. There were corpses everywhere. He could revive wherever he wanted even if I killed him.

“Ah, I’m telling you this now, but I had no ill intentions, alright?”

I knew he wasn’t lying. This person really wasn’t thinking anything when he killed me.

He just wanted profit.

He could kill me, so he did. Because he needed something, he killed. Because everything else other than him was worthless to him. This man was just like the me from the past.

“It’s just that... I wanted to be god since a while back. You understand, right?”

Necro probably would have become god if I didn’t come here. He probably didn’t think he’d be interrupted like this.

“Yeah, I get it.”

“Eh? Really?”

“You and I... We’re both idiots that just can’t be saved.”

Necro snorted and erased all signs of emotion from his face.

“What the hell? You’re the only idiot here.”

Black mana began effervescing out of his body. Danse macabre, the dance of death. The strongest form of body enhancement in the branch of black magic was currently being cast by Necro.

“Didn’t I tell you before? Throw away any preconceptions you might have had about wizards.”

A speed that couldn’t be detected by a human’s eyes. Before I could even respond, Necro had come up to my face and had stuck his hand into my chest.

Flatline–.

Normally, this technique would have simply stopped my heart. But a giant destructive force was added onto it, shattering the right side of my ribcage into pieces.

Bang!

My body flew back and became stuck in the wall. My cells immediately got to work and began to regenerate my ribs that were harder than titanium.

The pain was still there though.

“Kuh...!”

Thirty seconds before the magic was cast. I couldn't afford to strengthen my body at this time. I could only take the beatings with my body. I somehow got myself up on my feet. Necro immediately attacked and I was given several fractures on my limbs.

He wasn't using magic. He must be thinking that he won't be interrupted in this time.

“What is it? Does it hurt? That's good~ pain is a part of life. Don't you get the feeling that you're really living it right now?”

I didn't take out the Murderer despite his taunts. It was impossible to calculate the coordinates unless I got out anyway.

And...

This was enough.

I lay down on the floor as I looked up at the smiling Necro.

“Do you remember? About Whitehead?”

“What? Why? Thinking of home now that you're about to die?”

“It's good that you remember.”

I activated the equation that I had prepared as I finished. Necro, who had been a little unguarded due to his domination till now, let out a shout of surprise.

“What...?”

Camille restrained his arms. Chrono took hold of his waist and left leg. Iris took care of his right leg.

“What the... Let go!”

Necro did all he could to shake off the three heroes. He realized that doing so was impossible shortly after and shouted at me.

“How did you...!”

“Necromancy isn’t something that belongs to just you.”

Magic was something that was borrowed. But right now, I was able to imitate his necromancy without borrowing a god’s power.

“Hah...”

Necro let out a small laugh. He closed his mouth for a second, then raised his head.

“So? What now? Are you planning on turning me into a corpse doll?”

“Of course not.”

It would be troublesome if the finale was that boring.

“Back to the question I asked. Do you happen to know what one needs in order to achieve nuclear fusion?”

Necro frowned slightly.

“Again with your lectures... Plutonium? Uranium?”

“That’s nuclear fission. What one needs for nuclear fusion, however, is deuterium and tritium. Both ingredients that could be found from the sea.”

Necro’s face stiffened.

“A sphere of death with a radius of 300km. The artificial sun created from seawater would burn even inside this barrier of yours.”

Until absolutely nothing was left. Not even a bit of bone or flesh. Necro realized what was about to happen to him and widened his eyes.

“You crazy...!”

Now he gets it. I clenched my fist as I watched him struggle. The fusion reactor began to spin whilst letting out a rainbow light. It sped up faster and faster without ever showing signs of slowing.

“—If you like death so much, you might as well stay dead forever.”

A heart is too much for an idiot like you.

“Cold fusion.”

[Shining—]

I could hear a kind, cheerful voice in my ear along with my memories that would never return.

[Hey! Hi! Nice to meet you! My name's Morto Hai! In short, you can call me haihai?] [I may be a beautiful girl, but please don't think perverted thoughts about me! I'll sue you!] [You need to be more mature. I almost invoked the power of a cop within me, you know?] [Nyaha☆] [It must be nice being so simple, Mr. Murderer. You're like an amoeba.] [For you, each hit will be filled with love. Please scream like a pig in happiness every time you get hit.] [Mr. Murderer~ Mr. Murderer~] [It's a flower fairy!] [Mr. Murderer, were you thinking of something very inappropriate about now?] [...No, it's nothing. It's just... I was surprised at how human you are.]

I probably won't be able to ever forget it. The most valuable autumn that I had ever experienced in my life. The most precious person I had ever encountered in my life.

I haven't managed to tell her at the time, but I think I can answer her now.

[These wasted days add up to your entire life!] [Why here...? Aha, it's a date, isn't it? How nice of you, Mr. Murderer!] [Look, look, Mr. Murderer. I'm going to stop your heart with these cat ears!] [Dear, dear. To think you haven't even noticed yet... Isn't being able to date me a great fortune in itself?] [Tada~ How is it? Do you feel your heart throbbing yet?] [In order to create a better world for everyone!]

The girl who liked to hit.

The girl who liked to eat.

The girl who liked cats.

The girl who liked quizzes.

[I love you.]

I love you.

“Morto Hai.”

[Buster——!!!!!!!]

A white light began to appear from the center of the castle. This giant ball of heat quickly swallowed the castle whole and became even bigger as it devoured on the corpses of the dead.

I watched this on with my floating eye as I peacefully closed my eyes.

Chapter 68. Epilogue

Today's an important day. I paid more attention to my hair than I usually did and took out a suit from the vault. A gift that she gave to me some time in the past.

“...Seems a tad bit strange, doesn't it?”

Well, I'll get used to it. I fixed my tie one last time in the mirror. I checked for any dust on my suit. I needed to be perfect today.

Can't make any mistakes this time.

I walked down from the library down to the first floor. I stopped for a second to look at the kitchen. Thinking of the adventure we shared made me smile uncontrollably.

I walked forward.

Once I opened the door, I was greeted with a shower of warm sunlight. It was spring. Already a year and three months had passed since that incident.

I worked quite hard during that time.

I absorbed Necro's magic.

I turned the entire world against me.

I ran around everywhere trying to deal with the mess I'd made. And finally, I was ready to meet her.

"I wonder if I'm too late...?"

I walked the spring path laid out before me. The town was busy with workers running around rebuilding the destroyed buildings. We should be able to get a functioning country up and running in about three years. I was planning on helping them as much as possible from the sidelines in the process. I looked down at the town that "we" were to live in and moved high up in the sky.

A beautiful view was laid out before me.

The location where the castle used to be had turned into a giant crater that had filled with seawater, turning into a bay of sorts. The dead earth that used to be the Haze Republic was now being dotted with patches of plants.

Even with a tragedy like that, the world was still moving on peacefully. Towards a better world for everyone, like she said.

"...I think I can do it now."

My heart had calmed enough. I moved to the edge of the country and was greeted with a field of spring flowers. Starting from linden viburnums, laurels, all the way to forget-me-nots. Almost all the spring flowers seemed to have been gathered here. In the middle of

the field was a magnolia tree that had fully bloomed.

I wonder if she's still waiting? Maybe she left after having waited for such a long time...

Sha—-.

A pleasant zephyr swept through the field of flowers, causing a wave of flowers to float up into the air. I looked up into the sky as I walked. A single magnolia petal was dancing above me.

In front of this beautiful sight, I could only think of one thing.

Really.

I was lucky to be born in this world—-.

“Aliyah Herz.”

Now, let us be happy together. If we are to make a happy world, the first person who needs to become happy is you.

“—-Heart of Gold.”

A question appeared in front of me.

<You've selected [Life]. Will you purchase it? Y/N>

If there was one thing that I would wish for, it was her happiness. I answered the question with a smile.

Status [Normal][Bless][Bless][Bless][Bless][Bless][Bless][Bless]...

Level	Immeasurable	HP	?????/?????(+0) <div><div></div></div>
Name	Morto Hai	MP	?????/?????(+0) <div><div></div></div>
Title	Menticide	Attack	?????(+0)
Class.	God	Spell	?????(+0)
		HP Regen.	?????(+0)
		MP Regen.	?????(+0)
Power	Heart of Gold (Lv.9) (10 Billion dollars)	Defense	?????(+0)
		Magic Res.	?????(+0)

Abilities

Whitehead(Lv.9)	Menticide(Lv.9)
Xenoglossy(Lv.9)	Magic(Lv.9)
Undying(Lv.9)	Time Control(Lv.6)
Absolute Reflect(Lv.8)	Reality Modification(Lv.9)
Overdeath(Lv.4)	Sweet Tooth(Lv.2)
Fragile(Lv.3)	Unknown Cause(Lv.3)
Red Hand(Lv.4)	...

Demon Eyes

Eyes of Truth(Rk.S+)	...
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Jin

Phase Shift(Rk.S+)	...
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Commodities

Heart(∞)	
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Status [Normal][Bless][Bless][Bless][Bless][Bless][Bless][Bless]...

Level	Immeasurable	HP	?????/?????(+0) <div><div></div></div>
Name	Morto Hai	MP	?????/?????(+0) <div><div></div></div>
Title	Menticide	Attack	?????(+0)
Class.	God	Spell	?????(+0)
		HP Regen.	?????(+0)
		MP Regen.	?????(+0)
Power	Heart of Gold (Lv.9)	Defense	?????(+0)
	(0 dollars)	Magic Res.	?????(+0)

Abilities

Whitehead(Lv.9)	Menticide(Lv.9)
Xenoglossy(Lv.9)	Magic(Lv.9)
Undying(Lv.9)	Time Control(Lv.6)
Absolute Reflect(Lv.8)	Reality Modification(Lv.9)
Overdeath(Lv.4)	Sweet Tooth(Lv.2)
Fragile(Lv.3)	Unknown Cause(Lv.3)
Red Hand(Lv.4)	...

Demon Eyes

Eyes of Truth(Rk.S+)	...
----------------------	-----

Jin

Phase Shift(Rk.S+)	...
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“—Yes, please.”

Thank you for this world.

<I’m Sorry For Being Born In This World, 完>